

J. M. Vickers 1784

T H E
TWO MENTORS:
A
MODERN STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
THE OLD ENGLISH BARON.

“ A man cannot possess any thing better than a good
“ woman; nor any thing worse than a bad one.”

SIMONIDES:

Translated by Addison, Spectator, 209.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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TWO MENTORS ADVERTISING

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and a number of other persons
present to our late Convention, and
the House, who, as I have mentioned
was a distinguished member of the
Senate were present. - History of the
all kinds were reported with accuracy
of the meeting, and the
The first Address of the day was
by the President, who mentioned
the names and contributions of the Public
for their application of the
Publications; the report of their In-
dulgence towards the present Work,
and that as it is submitted to
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A
MODERN STORY.

LETTER I.

RICHARD MUNDEN, Esq. to ED-
WARD SAVILLE, Esq.

YOUNG MAN!

I TAKE it very ill that I have not heard from you since you left London!—Do not I stand in the place of a father to you?—Nay, have I not been *more* than a *father* to you: for I am no relation by blood, but your *guardian* only, and the friend of your deceased father?

VOL. I.

B

First,

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First, I released you from the harsh discipline of a pedagogue, and forbade him to lash you into *learning*, alias *pedantry*; which only serves to narrow and depress the spirit of a gentleman, or else to make him conceited and overbearing.—Secondly, I followed you with my good offices afterwards, to mitigate the fatigues of education, and to make you an *accomplished man*, with as little trouble to yourself as possible.

From my first knowledge of you, I perceived that there were several obstacles in the way of my wishes for you.

First, an aspect of thoughtfulness and care, that gives you the air of a tradesman, instead of the *degagée* address of a fine gentleman; and, secondly, that mean, sneaking quality of bashfulness, which loses all your consequence in mixed company, and makes you appear like a school-boy trembling under the ferula. To remedy the last defect, I sent you to Westminster School, which has generally been an *effectual cure* for it; and I hoped an acquaintance with the *world* would wear off the first. In the next place, I sent you to
Cambridge,



Cambridge, not to study the *mathematics*, which are the *ton* of that place at this time : no, nor yet the *classics*, which are quite out of *fashion* : and still less *theology*, or the *civil law* :—no, Edward, my design was to introduce you to the acquaintance of the young men of fortune and fashion there, and to pave the way to your preferment in future, by making an interest with them.

From the *college*, I brought you to the *capital*, and introduced you into the world, recommending you to a polite circle of my friends there. Still I saw the first traces upon you ; and my friends saw it also.—This will not do for a man of the world, said a certain nobleman ; this ward of yours has the air of a college pedant !—What then shall I do with him, said I ?—Carry the young man into the company of women of *taste* and *spirit*, who know *life* and all the *joys* of it, said my friend. It is *there* he must receive the *polish*, the *ton*, the *finishing* strokes of a fine gentleman. Give him lord *Chesterfield's* Letters to his Son ; let him *study them closely*, they will do for him more than all your *schools* and *universities*.—I followed my friend's di-

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rections.

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rections. He introduced me to Lady Belmour, as the person best qualified to give you this *polish* so much *wanted*, and so *indispensably* requisite. I carried you into her company, that she might observe your person and qualifications; she spoke better of both than I expected. "Saville is a fine young fellow," said she; "he wants only to converse with *our sex*, and to receive his *finishing* from us; send him to me for one summer, and I warrant I will give you a good account of him."

I accepted her offer with proper acknowledgments. She did you the honour to invite you with a party of her select friends to her country seat; a favour you received with the coldness of a Carthusian friar: however, you *obliged me* so far as not to *refuse* it; and that gave me some *hopes* of you.

All these advantages have I thrown in your way, Edward; but it depends upon yourself to make a right application of them. You do not want understanding; otherwise I would not stand reasoning with you, and accounting for every step I have taken for your service.—I loved your father; I am inclined

to love you. I have no children, nor near relations.

Spell this, and put it together, if you have sense and spirit in you; but if you disappoint and disgrace me, look to it, Edward:—Your father was a man of spirit; he lived too fast for his health and fortune;—you have not yet begun to *live at all*.—Open your eyes to the happiness that awaits you:—the world and all its charms are before you: they invite your senses to enjoy them; and you ought to swim in your proper element.

Lady Belmour's house is the seat of pleasure:—the goddess of Love resides there in person; may she touch and polish your heart, and bless you with her kindest influence!—If you want money, let me know it; and your draft upon me shall be answered immediately.—Attend to Lady Belmour's advice and instructions. *Write* to me, or let me hear from *her*, that you are all that *she* wishes you to be; and I will call myself your most affectionate friend and guardian,

RICHARD MUNDEN.

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LETTER II.

The Rev. Mr. JOHNSON to EDWARD
SAVILLE, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

THE pleasure I took in executing the office of college-tutor to you here, left an agreeable impression upon my mind.— The ingenuousness of your heart, and the sweetness of your disposition, engaged my affections to you at the *time*, and have made me interested in every thing that has befallen you since. I have made enquiry after your situation and conduct, and have gained intelligence of every step you have taken since you left college. Your Guardian—good heaven! what a guardian for a virtuous youth!—finding you have not acquired the *ton* of fashionable *life*, nor the spirit of vanity and dissipation, has sent you to Lady Belmour to finish your education, and to give you what he calls the *POLISH* of a *fine gentleman*.

I am

I am told moreover, that you have not yet disgraced the character you acquired in the early part of your life, that you have not quitted the path of virtue, and followed that of vice: but that you are in the situation of the young *Hercules*, balancing between *Virtue* and *Pleasure*.

From these circumstances I have formed a *wish* and a *hope*, that I might still be of some service to you; by shewing you the dangers that surround you, and pointing out the path whereby you may escape them. You are thrown upon the island of Calypso,—she orders her nymphs to spread their toils for you, and exert all their wiles to ensnare you; nor is the goddess herself without attractions.

Sensual pleasure is an enchanted cup, it intoxicates the heart, and weakens the reason; while the soul is in the state of *inebriation*, all its nobler faculties are *suspended*, if not *lost*. The heart is insensibly corrupted and depraved, it loses by degrees all its finest perceptions, and at length becomes wholly immersed in grossness and brutality. Oh, Saville, was your heart made for such a state!—Does not your honest heart disdain the bondage?—

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dage?—I cannot believe those chains fit easy on you, till you tell me they do. If my conjectures and hopes are well founded, write to me, and either encourage or forbid my future admonitions.

Lady Belmour is the Priestess of Venus, she is the convenient friend of both sexes.—She keeps a gaming-house all the winter in London, and is visited by people of *rank* and *character*, such as this age allows of:—in the summer she carries on her business in the country,—there she provides mistresses for youths of quality and fortune, and husbands for girls of fashionable education and doubtful virtue. Old jointured dowagers purchase young husbands, and toothless dotards young wives, through her mediation;—she condescends to accept a *consideration* for her profligate services. She has methodized pleasure into a *system*, and conducts her offices with an air of decorum and regularity, that conceals the deformity of vice from its deceived and captivated votaries.

Beware, oh beloved and amiable youth, of her seducing arts!—If you have hitherto avoided, make haste to escape them. If you have

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have been betrayed into the snare, break your fetters, before *habit* has *rivettèd* them upon you.

I will pursue you with my friendship and counsel, till you refuse me with scorn and contempt;—till I am well assured, that you have given up your nobler hopes and virtuous prospects;—till you become the voluntary votary of vice and folly, I will call myself your affectionate friend, servant, and monitor,

JARVIS JOHNSON.

LETTER III.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

SIR,

I HAVE been most agreeably surprized by a letter from my worthy tutor and friend Mr. Johnson, and still more gratified by the contents, upon which I have often meditated with renewed pleasure. Is it possible, that the qualities he imputes to me can have given me a place in his memory?—Oh no! It is his enlarged and benevolent soul, that,

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in pity to my youth and situation, has induced him to extend his hand to my assistance, in order to extricate me from the snares of vice and folly.

Thus do wise and good men give consequence to those they instruct, in order to lead them into the paths of virtue. A man who thinks himself unable to overcome temptation, will sink into inactivity and despondency; and he who is encouraged to exert his ability, will do it effectually.

Yes, my tutor, my friend, my monitor! I acknowledge the generous artifice you have used with me, which has answered your kind intention; by giving me credit with myself, you have encouraged me to aspire to your friendship. To whatever motive I am indebted for it, I receive it as a gift from heaven. I have often wished for such a friend, though I hardly dared to hope such an one would be granted me. You have held up the light of truth before my eyes, have shewn me the dangers that surround me, and directed me how to escape them.

I embrace your friendship with my whole heart?—Continue, dear Sir, your generous

rous cares for me; I will be accountable to you for my future conduct; I will acquaint you with every step I take:—both my actions and motives shall be open to your inspection; you shall be to me as a second conscience, and your admonitions shall encourage or restrain all my undertakings. What *Sylph*, or what *Genius*, gives you intelligence of every thing that happens to me?—It is a *good spirit*, I am certain, because it is one of your *familiars*. He tells you the truth, when he compares this mansion to Calypso's island; and yet I think it still more resembles the Isle of Cyprus.—The nymphs and swains here breathe that air of softness and voluptuousness which is so contagious to all who encourage its influence. I have hitherto resisted the charm; but how long I should have continued to do so, is uncertain. My heart, at times, seemed ready to give way; but you have held over me the shield of Minerva; the enchantment is dissolved, and I feel myself delivered.

As the first proof of that *ingenuousness*, which indeed is the only quality I presume to claim as *my own*, I send you enclosed a

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letter I have lately received from *my virtuous guardian*. My heart rises with indignation, mingled with contempt, whenever I think on *him* and his *instructions* to me. His company and advice misled my father into courses which brought upon him both shame and sorrow. Upon his death-bed, he severely repented the sins and follies of a life spent unprofitably to himself and others. I have often wondered that he did not *alter his will*, which gave *this man* the care of my person and fortune, who ever since has been labouring to contaminate my mind with his own vile principles. God of his goodness gave me a wife and virtuous mother, the greatest blessing a child can receive. Her precepts were the guide of my childhood, and her remembrance will ever be sacred to me. She was taken from me too soon, or she would have been my director and monitor to this hour. But to supply her loss, Heaven has sent me a preceptor and friend in Mr. Johnson; by his advice and assistance I trust I shall escape the labyrinth of vice and folly, into which *Munden* and his *emissaries* have brought me.

I will

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I will tell you, my dear Sir, all that has passed here lately, if you can think it worth your attention; when you shall be acquainted with all the circumstances of my present situation, you will give me your advice upon it.—If you judge it necessary, I will immediately burst the bands that keep me here, and come to you at Cambridge: but I have either *convinced* or *persuaded* myself, that though I dwell in the land of vice and folly, I am engaged in the service of *virtue*; you shall decide on this subject.

Write to me soon; give me your *advice*, *instruction*, *correction*; I will receive them with submission and obedience.—Assure yourself of my eternal gratitude for your friendship and protection to, dear Sir, your pupil, friend, and servant,

EDWARD SAVILLE.

L. E. T.

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LETTER IV.

MR. SAVILLE to Mr. MUNDEN.

SIR,

I AM very much obliged for the regard and kindness you are pleased to express for me:—but excuse me if I say, what sincerity extorts from me, I cannot use the methods you recommend, as the only means to deserve it.

I have no relish for the society into which you have been solicitous to introduce me. The *men* are unprincipled, vicious, and overbearing; the *women*—I beg pardon, the *ladies*—are sprightly and *degagée*; but they are not at all to my *taste*. I confess, that Lady Belmour is *sensible, polite, and accomplished*; but I have imbibed an early pre-possession in favour of a different style of female manners, which I received from my *mother*, who, in my *estimation*, was one of the best of women. She was the *victim* of my father's irregularities, and she died praying for his reformation.

formation. She also prayed that I might be preserved from the contagion of a *bad example*. My father laughed at her *prayers*, and *predictions*, and *prophecies*, as he then called them; and for several years entirely forgot them, and the *dear saint* that uttered them; but in the days of his *last sickness* they *rushed* into his *memory*, to his bitter grief and regret, and *reproached* him with his past conduct. He then spoke of my *mother* as a *superior being*; he lamented his cruel and ungenerous behaviour to her; he exhorted me to follow *her example*, and to *avoid* his own; by this circumstance, my *opinions* and *principles* received their *confirmation*. Thus you may perceive, Sir, that I can produce my father's *judgement*, though against his *practice*, to authenticate my *own*; and as you profess yourself *his friend*, you cannot justly be *offended* with me for *appealing* to *him* in behalf of my own principles.

* It was my father's pleasure to leave me under your care; on this account I have paid you *implicit* obedience: *perhaps* I may have been *too implicit* in this *last proof* I have given, by coming hither against my own judgement
and

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and inclination: however it has shewn me a variety of characters, and made me acquainted with the *world*, as you call a particular circle.

I am afraid you will not think me *improved* by this excursion; I have neither altered my *opinions* nor my *department*; the latter I hope to preserve natural, easy, and unaffected. I do not wish to appear any otherwise than Nature designed me, for I detest falsehood and deceit in every form. I make no difference between *simulation* and *dissimulation*; I hate them both. Your *noble preceptor* is not my *Oracle*; I am not ambitious of being what *he wishes* his son, a man of the world.

I shall never make choice of his *pupil* for my *friends*; the more I see of them, the greater is my dislike to them.

When I become my own master, which I presume will be at my *return* to town, I will select my own friends, and be accountable to none but God and my conscience.

I have attained the age when the laws of my country authorize a man to act for himself; but I shall always look on you, Sir, as my *father's friend*, and the man he appointed to be

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be my *guardian*; I disclaim every *other* pretension to your favour; but, as far as my *principles* will *permit*, I will always approve myself,

SIR,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

EDWARD SAVILLE.

LETTER V.

Mr JOHNSON to Mr. SAVILLE.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR letter gave me great pleasure, for it has shewn me that you have entered fully into my intentions, and that you accept me as your friend and monitor.

I shall directly enter upon my office, and my first act of it shall be to forward your letter to Mr. Munden.

I am upon the whole well pleased with it, and yet I think you might have *touch'd* him with a *lighter hand*, for I wish you to shew him every kind of complaisance in your external

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ternal behaviour, tho' not in your actions.— However, I take it as a proof of your sincerity, and a security for the steadiness of your principles, since you are neither ashamed nor afraid to avow them, when you are properly called upon. I do exceedingly desire to know all that has befallen you at Lady Belmour's; and how it is possible that in the regions of vice you can be employed in the service of virtue.

Your ingenuousness bids me hope every thing that is right; but, if you should have deviated from the *strait* path of *virtue*, you need not fear to confess it to me, for you will find me an indulgent friend, and not an austere corrector.

My curiosity is excited to know whether Calypso is indeed the enchantress I have heard her described—how she governs the pupils of her academy, how she sustains her consequence with them while she lures them into her toils.—Write every thing that you think will be either interesting or entertaining to me, without reserve.—Be assured that you will meet with indulgence wherever it is necessary, with approbation where deserved,
with

with advice where wanted; for I am, with
truth and finery, Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

JARVIS JOHNSON.

LETTER VI.

Mr. MUNDEN to Lady BELMOUR.

MADAM,

I PRESUME to acquaint your Ladyship
with a circumstance or two relating to the
saucy boy I lately recommended to your no-
tice and favour.—I wrote to him a letter full
of *fatherly advice and affection*; but the young
puppy sets me at nought—tells me he is *wiser*
than I, that *my acquaintance are not to his taste*,
that he is determined to be his *own master*, and
to choose his *own friends*. If he continues
to treat me in this manner, I will give him
up for ever, and choose some stranger to be
my *heir*, instead of the son of my *friend*.

I beg

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I beg to know your Ladyship's opinion of Saville, and to have your advice how to proceed with him.

He has sense enough—learning *more* than enough—*spirit* and *generosity*, but *all* in the wrong places.—Every canting, whining, *unfortunate wretch* has the power to draw his money from him; but he is *frugal* to a fault in every *gentleman-like* expence.—He has the *spirit* to bid defiance to his *best* friend, and the *mauvaise honte* in good company. He has no ambition, nor yet the softer passions, or at least he has never shewn any signs of them. Whenever I go about to penetrate into his character, he foils me in the attempt, and turns my own weapons upon me.

I depend upon your Ladyship's penetration to discover how he is to be managed, and to let me know it; and as you *speak of him*, so I shall *act towards him*, for I know your Ladyship's discernment, and I rely upon your judgement.

I am,

Your Ladyship's most obedient servant,

RICHARD MUNDEN.

L E T-

LETTER VII.

Lady BELMOUR to Mr. MUNDEN.

MR. Munden may rest assured that Lady Belmour has always in view the *object* of his care and affection, and follows him with her attentions; she sees no reason to *despair* of making him *every thing* that his friend wishes him to be.

After all, *men* are very imperfect *preceptors*; it is not by reason and document that the *polish* of life is required. See what *awkward* or *buckram* figures, the youth step from the school and college into the world!—It is by conversing with *our sex* they become accomplished; we cultivate the *heart*, and polish the *manners*. Men who have had sense and spirit enough to shake off the fetters of *vulgar prejudices*, have acknowledged the advantages they have derived from *us*, and have endeavoured to extend them to others. There have been schools of this kind both among the ancients and the moderns. Greece had her *Aspasia's*, *Leontium*, and *Thais*.' The accomplished Alcibiades

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Alcibiades was an example of the benefits of this society. Rome had her *Fulvia's* and *Aurelia's*. And France has had the glory to stand *alone* among the *moderns*, in the *reviving* and *improving* upon these polite *academies*. From the *days* of the enchanting *Ninon*, there has been a succession of *ladies* who have employed themselves in polishing the manners of the youth, and cultivating their hearts.— We are at *this day* aiming at an imitation of their taste and elegance, but we do it badly; we have lost our own *preciseness* and *ceremony*, but we have not yet acquired the *naïveté* and *nonchalance* of our accomplished neighbours. However, as all improvements are made by degrees, there is great reason to hope that we may *in time* acquire them. The ferocity and bluntness of this country is giving way to the delicacy and refinement of the continent; our language is daily improving and polishing, our ladies have an air of ease and freedom, they throw off the *primness* and *reserve* of past times, and the *restraints* of *rigid systems*, which inspire *illiberal* sentiments and manners.—In this state of *improved society* I aspire to have *my name* descend

scend to posterity, as one of those women of spirit, who lend their hands to forward the efforts of others ; to emancipate the youth of both sexes from the ignorance and *prejudices* of *Gothic times* and *manners*.

Your pupil wears a veil of shyness and reserve, thro' which it is difficult to penetrate :—no matter ; we shall find out the way to make him throw it aside. The traveller, whom the wind and storm could not oblige to throw off his cloak, was induced by the warm sun to cast it away.—We will awaken his passions, the animating sun-shine of love shall warm his heart, he shall throw away the *cloak*, and we shall see what kind of a man there is under it.

Do not be impatient.—Leave the event to me,—I will be answerable for the success.—I will tell you every thing that is material for you to know. I am obliged by your confidence and esteem, and will approve myself,

SIR,

Your sincere friend and humble servant,

AMELIA-SOPHIA-WILHELMINA BELMOUR.

L E T.

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LETTER VIII.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

My dear MENTOR,

I WILL now discharge my promise, by giving you a faithful account of all that has passed during my visit here: when you have the whole story before you, you will judge of the nature of my situation, the dangers and temptations that surround me, and of my ability and intention to escape them. As soon as the king's birth-day was past, I received a summons to attend Lady Belmour to her country seat. I was honoured with a place in her own coach, with Sir George Richmore and Miss Elford, with whom he has a temporary connexion.—We found several couples ready-paired in the ARK (if you will allow me the expression), and waiting our arrival, for none came but what brought his mate, or expected to find one here—Mr. Morris and Miss Barnham, Mr. Lewson and Miss Marshal, Sir John Lacy and Miss Wilton.—There was also a certain Mr.

Mr. Armstrong, who seemed to pay his homage to our Lady Governess, and a Miss La Nouë, who, as I have reason to believe, was intended for my *partner*; several other pairs were expected.—Parties of pleasure of all kinds were proposed, when the remainder of the company should arrive.

They were in raptures of joy at our arrival; her Ladyship welcomed us with equal politeness and vivacity.

My dear friends, welcome to the land of wit, love, and liberty! enjoy yourselves in your own way; be *happy* here, and *I must be so*.

They chatted, laughed, danced, sung, and tried by every way to show their wit and their happiness; I was the only person that seemed insensible to the pleasures around me.

This mansion is large and convenient; it belonged to a West India merchant, who lived in the great style for about fifteen years; then sunk into ruin and obscurity, and died in the Fleet. His wife died soon after; his children were minors; his fortune is in the hands of his creditors; and his affairs cannot be settled till his eldest son comes of age,

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who is now but in his thirteenth year. The assignees let this house to Lady Belmour, and it suits her purpose exactly:—she can accommodate a great number of visitors: she keeps several carriages, a stable of good horses, and many servants; for she makes it a *condition*, that her guests shall bring none, but be attended by those of her own choosing;—but there is every accommodation that can be wished for ease, pleasure, and luxury.

Her ladyship is a fine and a graceful woman, about forty years, but does not choose to be thought so far advanced,—“*ancient Phillis has young graces*”—fat, but not unwieldy, just “*l’aimable embonpoint*”;—easy and polite in her deportment, with some wit, more satire, and every fashionable accomplishment.

She has an air of freedom and assurance bordering upon voluptuousness: when she is not pleased, it is tempered with haughtiness to those who have offended her: at other times she assumes the most insinuating air and manner, and when she tries to please she is *almost irresistible*.

There

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There is an air of freedom and levity, and yet not absolute indecency in the conversations that pass here after dinner and supper. The morning, every person spends as he pleases; some ride out, some walk, some read;—the ladies make working parties, or sometimes musical ones; there is a music-room with instruments of all sorts, and books of the most fashionable compositions.

This is indeed the land of liberty, and here you breathe the air of affluence, luxury, and voluptuousness; there is every incitement offered to every one of the senses in turn; I resisted them, and was for some time merely a spectator of the scenes before me. Lady Belmour behaved with the utmost politeness to me, and seemed to leave me at liberty to amuse myself as I thought proper.

When she found that I took no particular notice of any person, but seemed to be reserved and abstracted, and to consider the company before me only as subjects for speculation, she began her attack upon me in the most artful manner. She asked me how I liked the country, her villa, her friends, the men, the women, and at last Miss La

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Nouë? I answered her briefly and coldly; and to the last question, *very well*.

She laughed scornfully;—Is that your way of commending a fine girl, Sir?—Yes, said I, I think her a fine young woman.—She put up her lip;—Perhaps you do not admire a Brunette? what style of beauty is most to your taste?—It is not complexion, said I, nor the colour of the *hair*, or the *eye*, that makes a woman *attracting*.—What is it then? said she, smiling.—It is the *tout ensemble*, which is not easy to describe.—Very well, Sir, it is easier to *feel* than to *describe*; is it not?—I believe so, Madam.—Well, Sir, go on.—I am entirely of your Ladyship's opinion.—No, not *entirely*, for you do not like Miss La Nouë.—I did not say so, Madam.—No, Sir, but your behaviour does. How can you see a fine girl, disengaged, looking at you with eyes that speak nothing like disapprobation or disdain, and yet pay no homage to her charms? She has wit and spirit as well as *form*; and you would find her capable of conversing, and entertaining you, if you would make an *effort* to speak to her.—I have no doubt of it, said I; the lady

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lady deserves all that your Ladyship says of her. But why should you wish me to be particular in my notice to her?—*I wish it!* Ridiculous idea! *You* are the *loser*. La Nouë does not want admirers.—I dare say not, Madam; but I have no pretensions.—Go thy way, Cymon! thou hast a form, but no animation.

Some of the company came to us, and broke off the conference.

From this day Calypso and her nymphs exerted all the arts of their profession to allure me into the snares of Cupid; and finding them ineffectual to subdue the stubborn heart that resisted them, they set the *men* upon me, who exercised their wit at every weapon of raillery and ridicule, but all in vain. I wrapt myself up in impenetrable reserve, and baffled all their attempts upon me.

I declined most of their parties abroad; I can always amuse myself at home. Sometimes I retired into the library to read, at others into the music-room, and practised new lessons upon the harpsichord: but these sedentary amusements affected my health and spirits; I began to find exercise necessary; yet

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I would not go out in the parties, but rose early in the morning, and walked or rode before breakfast.

In one of my morning rambles I made an acquaintance with a gentleman farmer who was walking over his grounds; and upon further knowledge I find him deserving of my friendship. I will give you a hasty sketch of his history.

His name is Franklin, a man of genteel birth and education; he inherited an estate of about five hundred pounds a year; he married, for love, a woman without a shilling. They set out in a style much above their fortunes, and ran out of bounds, till they were involved in debts and difficulties. Just as they were on the brink of ruin, a relation of Mrs. Franklin, who took no notice of her while a poor unportioned girl, hearing she was well married, left her a fortune of five thousand pounds, which restored them to competence and happiness. Mr. Franklin paid off his debts, cleared his estate, took a farm into his own hands, studied agriculture and oeconomy, and was successful in his practice of them: his wife turned her

her thoughts and attention to the domestic duties and virtues with equal success; in the course of ten years they are become rich, happy, and respectable.

Mr. Franklin encourages me to cultivate his friendship; he begins to lay his reserve aside, he rallies me on my situation; but he has given me a serious warning of Calypso and her nymphs; and I have convinced him of my honour and principles.

He seconds your admonitions, and offers me his advice or assistance whenever I shall find myself to stand in need of them. I often call upon him in my morning excursions, and we seem to be more and more pleased with each other's company.

You will often hear of him in the course of my adventures here. I will now conclude this packet, and bid you adieu for this time; but you shall soon hear further from,

Dear Sir, yours faithfully,

EDWARD SAVILLE.

LETTER IX.

MR. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

SIR,

I SHALL now proceed in my narration without further preface or apology. From the time I became acquainted with Mr. Franklin, I used myself to call on him frequently; and his conversation was a resource from the chagrin I received in my disagreeable situation.

After I had been here some weeks, two ladies came hither in a post-chaise from I———, of whom I must give you a particular account. Mrs. Crosby is a woman of *fashion* in *every sense* of the word.—She is lately separated from her husband; for what woman of taste and spirit can bear the insupportable fatigues and restraints of conjugal duties and employments, to which her cruel husband would have confined her? But she has found the way to burst the fetters, and recover her liberty.

Her

Her companion, a Miss Jones, of whom I have much to tell you.—We were sitting at tea when these ladies arrived:—Lady Belmour received Mrs. Crosby with open arms, and congratulated herself and the company on such an acquisition to their society.

She looked very coldly on Miss Jones, and just nodded to her; but her *chaperon* obliged her to alter her behaviour.

Let me, said she, have the honour to reconcile Miss Jones to her friend and patroness; she is now sensible that Lady Belmour always deserved that title; and I know your Ladyship's *generosity* and *greatness of soul* too well, to think you harbour any resentment against poor Sukey for her *misapprehension*; receive her once again under your protection,

At *your request*, my *dear* friend, I will, said my Lady; and, if it is not her own fault, she shall find me still her best friend. She then embraced the young lady, who had tears in her eyes (as I imagined) from the consciousness of having offended her.

She courtied low, but was silent;—we sat down, and returned to our tea.—There was

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in Miss Jones's deportment something different from the females I had yet seen in this house. There was a decency in her manners, and an air of melancholy diffused over her countenance, which rendered her more interesting to me than any person in the society. I was disposed to scrutinize her person and character; but Lady Belmour's eye intercepted mine whenever it wandered towards her; and seemed to say,—you have no business to enquire after that girl.—I was the more inclined to observe both *her* and the *ladies* who called themselves her *friends*.—They seemed to treat the young woman with an air of superiority; they called her *Sukey*, without any addition; she seemed dispirited and humbled before them.

Lady Belmour and Mrs. Crosby were profuse in their professions of friendship to each other, and in compliments upon the *great* and *superior* qualities they both possessed.—The words, *greatness of soul—high sentiments—enlarged ideas—liberal minds*, &c. flew about, and were as readily *accepted* as if *deserved*; and perhaps *more so*, for true merit is *modest*, and fearful of taking too much to itself: how-
ever

ever the conversation this evening was really more rational and agreeable than I had heard since I came hither, and I ventured to take a more than usual part in it.

The next morning I rose earlier than the rest of the company, went into the music-room, and sat down to the harpsichord, where I played for two hours, without any idea of being overheard.

At length I spied a white hand and arm upon my left shoulder, and started. It was Lady Belmour herself who surprised me.—She has a remarkably fine hand and arm; it then looked so beautiful that I was tempted to pay homage to it.—I was stopped by a violent burst of laughter, that checked me, and made me recollect that the tempter was at my elbow.—Upon my word, Sir, I did not think you were so great a proficient in music!—I felt myself confused and uneasy at this tête à tête. But she relieved me by her easy and familiar chit-chat.—Sit still, Saville, said she, and oblige me with another lesson.—I did so. She complimented me.—What a pity, said she, that you hide your talents as assiduously as others display them! I wish you were

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more communicative to your friends, for their sakes, and your own. You are with people who know how to distinguish merit, Sir ; but you are so reserved, that you will not suffer them to know your value.

Her air and manner were so insinuating, that I could not avoid answering her politeness. She praised, she flattered me ; she tried to gain my esteem and confidence. She asked me how I liked Mrs. Crosby and Miss Jones. My notice of the latter did not pass unobserved. I answered in general terms, but with *seeming* frankness. She seemed to wind about me in order to gain access to my heart: I was aware of her, and was upon my guard.

Our conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Crosby. I was desired to play again, was again applauded and solicited, till more company came in and summoned us to breakfast. I resumed my reserve, but kept an eye upon the *grand enchantress*, in order to find out what schemes she was forming for me ; and yet at times my heart reproached me with ingratitude for her politeness and attention to me.

This

This day was chiefly spent in conversation, and we had parties of cards in the evening. Miss Jones was silent and melancholy.

The next morning I rose with an intention to ride to Franklin's before breakfast; but, going into the stable, the servant told me the horse was lame. I determined to take the air, so I fauntered about the fields for an hour, and then came round into the garden-grounds, and from thence went into a pavilion, at the end of the pleasure garden, where I *surprised a lady*, as she did *me*. It was Miss Jones; she was leaning her head upon her hand, and weeping bitterly. She was very much confused at my approach; she rose up, and offered to retire. I begged pardon for my intrusion, which I assured her was accidental, and insisted on leaving her as I found her.—Sir, said she, I beg a favour of you?—Of me, Madam! What can I do for you?—It is, Sir, that you will have the goodness not to mention your seeing me here, and still less how you found me.—I will not, Madam, you may depend upon me. I am concerned, Madam, to see that you are not quite happy. I perceived it yesterday.

I wish

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I wish it was in my power to alleviate your sorrows;—Alas! said she, the *cause* of my distress cannot be *alleviated*.—Surely it *may*, said I; all human woes may be mitigated; I sincerely pity you, for I believe your distress *must* arise from *virtuous* motives.—She covered her face with both her hands.—Oh! Sir, said she, I believe you are too good for this house. If I dared to tell you—but what right have I to trouble you?

Dear Madam, if I can be of any service to you, do not scruple to trust me. I am a man of *honour*, and as such.—Dear Sir, excuse me if I ask you one question.—Are you any relation or friend of Lady Belmour's?—Neither, Madam.—Well, Sir, I think extremely well of you, for your generous pity to a stranger.—I am obliged to your good opinion, Madam; but what a man must he be who can see an amiable woman in tears, and not wish to relieve her distress?

Oh, Sir, you are too good to me.. You mentioned distress arising from virtuous motives. I would not for the world deceive or impose upon you. I dare not rank myself with the *good*; and yet I can truly say that
my

my distress arises from virtuous *motives*. But, Sir, the hour of breakfast approaches. I must not be seen with you. I shall be suspected of—I know not what; and you will be ridiculed on my account; let us separate: perhaps another time an opportunity may offer for me to communicate the cause of my distress, and ask your advice upon it.—You do me honour, Madam; will you meet me here to-morrow morning at seven o'clock?—She paused,—I will, Sir; I think I perceive in you a man of honour and principle. I will meet you, Sir; but let us not go in together.—Good-morning, Madam, I leave you this instant.—I did so, and went round the outside of the garden, and came in at the great gate. We met at breakfast as if we had not seen each other before. We spent the day in our usual way, in luxury and idleness. I will pursue the story in a new sheet, and leave you in suspense at the conclusion of this.—Adieu!

E. S.

LET-

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LETTER X.

MR. SAVILLE, in Continuation.

MY curiosity was raised by the morning's adventure, and my mind was employed the whole day in reflecting upon it, and in conjectures upon the subject of Miss Jones's distress, which I made no doubt proceeded from Lady Belmour's designs upon her.

Sometimes I fancied this *confidence* of Miss Jones was only a *scheme* to draw me into an engagement with her ; a minute after, I smiled at the suggestions of my fancy, and reflected that we are as often outwitted by *ourselves* as by *others*, when we indulge suspicions of any kind. I wished impatiently for the hour when I was to meet Sukey ; if she was artful, I was prepared to baffle hers, or her patroness's designs upon me.

I rose early in the morning. I hastened to the Pavilion with a book in my hand, and sauntered about for near an hour before she
came

came thither. At length I saw her coming towards me with a downcast eye, and timid aspect. When she began to speak, it was in a low and tremulous voice.

Sir, said she, I am afraid you will think me very free, upon so short an acquaintance, to trouble you with my story.

Madam, you honour me by your confidence; I shall be happy to do you any *service* that is consistent with my *principles*, which are not exactly conformable to those of the *lady of this house*.—That is what puzzles me, said she: you seem to know Lady Belmour's *character*, and yet I find you with her society.—I can not hither by inclination, Madam, but at the desire of a gentleman who calls himself my friend. I shall not stay here long; but, whilst I do, I am a *spectator*, and not an *actor* in the *Drama* that is represented here. Tell me, without scruple, how I can serve you; I am already inclined to be your friend, and I believe your story will confirm me so.

Indeed, Sir, said she, I want a friend. I will at all events tell you the particulars of my unhappy situation, and then you will judge

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judge whether I am most to be blamed or pitied.

My father and mother were upper servants in two noble families; my father by their interest obtained a place in the customs.

Their income was sufficient with prudence to support their family in a decent and respectable manner; but the habit of imitating the manners of their superiors, in the way of life they had seen, made them go to the extent of their fortune, and sometimes exceed it. They also retained a kind of *servility* in their behaviour, which led them to do services of every kind to those who had it in their power to make them *certain returns*. My poor father became at length sensible of the folly and danger of such a conduct; he is now pining under heartfelt grief and remorse for what is past; but my mother continues to act upon the same principles, though her daughter's ruin is one of the consequences of it. She boasts of the friends she has made, and the conveniences she derives from it. This way of thinking and acting is among the obligations she owes to Lady Belmour. I was the first-born of this marriage. Lady Belmour

mour was my godmother: if she had promised and vowed, that I should *worship* the pomps and vanities of the world, and sacrifice every thing to them, she had been a faithful sponsor; for every precept of hers was directly opposite to those of the Catechism.

She inspired me with the love of dress and pleasure; she laughed me out of that natural reserve which is given by Heaven to be the guard of female virtue. She taught me to despise *unfashionable* doctrines and persons; she carried me to public places, and shewed me young women, who lived in all the gaieties of life, without any apparent means to support them. She told me that handsome girls might always make their fortunes, if it were not their own faults. Thus educated, thus prepared for ruin, she threw me in the way of young men of high rank and fortune, who were unprincipled in all that regarded our sex.

I was gratified by the homage they paid me; I took to myself all the merit their flattery bestowed upon me; I was intoxicated with vanity, or I never could have believed that Lord C——— would make me his wife,

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wife, especially after I had been his mistress. He persuaded me to put myself under his protection; and Lady Belmour seconding his designs, I fell a victim to them.

Here she covered her face, and wept.— Dear Madam, proceed! said I. I pity you with my heart and soul; indeed you are more to be *pitied* than *blamed*.—She resumed her narrative.—A transient dream of pleasure succeeded; but I soon awoke to real misery. My weak heart, and perverted judgment, believed in promises of *eternal* constancy and *neverfailing* love. Alas! how common the deception! and how common the too late conviction! In two months the ardour of his passion abated; in another he grew tired of me, and sought a new object of his depraved appetite. He began to absent himself for a night, then two or three, and at length for a week together.

In these absences, the mistress of the house where I lodged lent me some books to read, for I complained of being too much alone: among these were some that opened my *mental* eye, and shewed me the misery of my situation;

tuation: I was struck with horror and remorse, and unavailing penitence.

I got acquainted with this good woman, and opened my heart to her: she saw and pitied my distress; she lent me other books that spoke of pardon and peace to the returning sinner; these I eagerly studied, and made them my constant companions.

When Lord C—— returned, I received him with coldness and disgust; refused his caresses, and shunned his presence. He desired an explanation of this behaviour, and I gave him such an one as he did not expect. He laughed at my scruples and at my penitence.—Sukey, says he, I intended to come to an explanation with you, but you have prevented me: take courage, my girl? these fancies will soon wear off. I will send Lady Belmour to comfort you, and to do the office of a friend between us. I am glad to find that you are as willing to part as I am. Adieu, my charmer!—So saying, he went from me, and in an hour after Lady Belmour came. She enumerated the advantages arising from such connections as these; said, that men were fickle creatures, but
 7 their

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their fortunes were convenient to us ; that we should bear with their faults, and make advantage by their weaknesſes, for in them lay our ſtrength and wiſdom.

She then acquainted me that Lord C—— had depoſited a bond of five hundred pounds in her hands for my uſe, which would effectually comfort me for his loſs. A few more ſuch *affairs* as this, my dear, ſaid ſhe, will make your fortune, and ſet you above the world.

I made no reply to her arguments, but only begged her to give me the bond.—No, my child, not yet, ſaid ſhe ; you are too young and ignorant to act for yourſelf. I will keep it for you ; and when I ſee a proper time, I will either ſurrender it, or employ it for your ſervice.

I demanded the bond, and ſaid I had earned it too dearly. She laughed.—You ſhall go with me into the country in the ſummer, and then we ſhall talk further on this ſubject, ſaid ſhe.—She left me in the ſullens, as ſhe called it ; and ſaid, when I was in a better humour ſhe would ſee me again. She called again two days after ; ſhe made me a

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new *proposal*, as she called it, and a settlement, from another party I had not yet seen. I refused it with disdain. I asked for my bond, and was again refused. I was angry; we quarrelled; she called me saucebox, and left me in wrath, saying, she would see me no more till I knew better the value of her friendship. I resolved to leave my lodging, to sell all my clothes and trinkets, and with the money put myself into business; but my appearance gave suspicions of my character, and the people to whom I applied treated me with harshness and impertinence. I desired the mistress of my lodgings to recommend me to any lady of character that wanted a companion; she spoke to a widow lady, who took me upon her word, and I joyfully went to her house. I had not been there many weeks, before this wicked woman found means to inform my protectress of my late connexion with Lord C——; in consequence of which she dismissed me immediately, without examining into the particulars of my story and situation.

I kept up my spirits till this event, and then they forsook me. I went home to my father's

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father's house almost in despair. My father was moved with my distress; but my mother reproached me with ingratitude to Lady Belmour, and told me I must ask her pardon, before she would receive me to her favour.

Mrs. Crosby soon after visited my mother, and joined with her to persuade me to visit Lady Belmour with her, and that she would use her influence with her to forgive me, and to restore my *bond*. This argument prevailed with me to come hither, for I knew there was no other method to recover it; and if I could prevail on lady Belmour to give it me, I have now an offer of entering into business, in partnership with a woman of character.

Since I came hither, Lady Belmour has hinted to me, that my *reconciliation* with her depends upon an implicit obedience to all her commands; and that she has expectations upon me, which will soon be further explained, and that will put it in my power to make my own terms with her.

I dread this explanation; I know too well her character and employment. I am fearful of being exposed to new attacks; of dangers, and perhaps insults, in this place; in
which

which case I have no friend to protect me from Lady Belmour's power. I am resolved not to enter into any new *connexion*; if I should find myself in this dangerous situation, I will fly from it; if I could depend upon any friend to favour my escape, I should be less apprehensive and more easy. I would not for the world engage you, Sir, in any contest or difficulty. I have told you nothing but simple truth; I seek not to conceal or extenuate my faults or follies; I thank God, I have seen them early, and am determined to avoid them in future, and to lead a life of sobriety and virtue; but I am disappointed of the *means* to put my resolutions in practice, and remain at present in a very disagreeable and precarious situation. I am afraid of *others*, and I am afraid of *myself*; lest either interest or pleasure should tempt me to return into the path I have but just escaped, and habit confirm me the slave of vice during my life.

Here Miss Jones ended her narrative, and with the greatest diffidence waited my sentence upon it. I comforted and re-assured her; pi-

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tied her misfortunes, and commended her virtuous resolutions.

I promised to be her friend and protector, in case she should want my assistance. We agreed to behave with the same distance and reserve as hitherto in company, and to communicate to each other every thing that we could discover in regard to Lady Belmour's designs upon either of us. After this league of friendship we separated, and went by different ways into the house, and to our respective apartments.

After this interview Miss Jones and I frequently exchanged courtesies; and I believe I paid her more attention than those forward girls who continually solicited my notice. Not a word or action of mine escaped the notice of Lady Belmour. I had no design upon any of them; but I avoided Miss La Nouë, and I was civil to Miss Jones; and from my behaviour Lady Belmour drew certain *inferences* that were unfavourable to her designs upon us all.

Some days after these incidents, there arrived two gentlemen in an elegant post-chaise, with flaming liveries. On the first view of
it

it the ladies exclaimed, It is dear Mr. Livermore? I ran out to see this welcome visitor; when I saw step out of the carriage a figure that excited such an inclination to laugh as I could hardly suppress. He was dressed in the gayest and most effeminate style, with a person that set all his ornaments at defiance.

A broad red face, embroidered with large pimples with white heads; a wide mouth full of yellow straggling teeth, with an affected smile upon it; a clumsy person overdressed, with an air and manner that beggars all description. He walked as if he was dancing; he lisped when he spoke: if any man had strove to render affectation *detestable*, he would have imitated him.

This Adonis was accompanied by a Mr. Allen, his parasite: by their reception, you would have supposed they were the most beautiful and amiable among the children of men.

Oh, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults
Look handsome in three thousand pounds a
year!

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From the time this, *cher mignon*, arrived here, I observed Miss Jones's countenance wore a veil of deep concern. Lady Belmour watched every turn of her eye, and every look that passed between her and me. I snatched a moment's opportunity, to say to her,—Meet me in the Pavilion to-morrow morning at six o'clock!—She answered me with caution, because of several persons within hearing,—Yes, Sir, I am entirely of your opinion.

The next morning I went, to my appointment, by five o'clock, and fauntered about for an hour, which I thought as long as three. At length the lady appeared.—Madam, said I, you are not punctual?—How so, Sir? I am rather before the time.—I thought it long: but come, sit down, and tell me what the occasion of this new cloud of trouble which I see upon your face.—Alas! said she, I am involved in a new perplexity. This coxcomb Livermore.—This *Adonis*, said I.—Well, Sir, this accomplished favourite of Lady Belmour and Mrs. Crosby, encouraged by them, has had the assurance to offer me a settlement, which I have answered with proper

per indignation and contempt. Lady Belmour laughed, sneeringly,—Pretty airs, Suke! and to me that know you!—Yes, Madam, so you do, to my cost, I am sure.—Saucy flut! And so you think to pass yourself upon that *novice Saville*, for a piece of virtuous composition! I see your aim, and I shall cross it.

Indeed, Madam, you are mistaken; I have no design upon Mr. Saville; nor he upon me.—That I shall know more certainly hereafter; but, in the mean time, pray, Ma'am, how do you intend to dispose of yourself?—If, said I, your Ladyship would restore me the *bond* in your possession, I would employ it in trade, and lead a life more suitable to my inclination.—I believe you *lie*, child! said she, haughtily.—No, indeed, Madam; I am *serious* in this intention.—Then you are a *fool*, said she, and cannot discern your own interest: but, to convince you that I do not mean to *rob* you of your *property*, I will tell you *my* intentions; I am still more your friend than you deserve; I am endeavouring to procure you an establishment for life. Mr. Livermore has made you

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a noble offer ; he will share his fortune with you, while you can retain his heart, and settle two hundred a year upon you *for life*. You refuse his proposal because you do not like his person ; foolish prejudice ! or else because you have *other views*, which I perceive plainly enough, for I am not to be imposed on by your Magdalen airs.

As soon as you are engaged in a new connexion, I will put the bond into your hands, but not before ; for I will not put it in your power to reproach me for what is past, nor yet to expose me and my society of *friends* to the animadversion of the *ignorant*, the *malicious*, nor the *hypocritical* part of the world, by making you *independent* of me.

And now, child, you know my fixed resolution, and you may act as you think fitting ; however, you will do well to reflect upon the *consequences* of making me your *enemy* ; and, while it is in your *power*, preserve me your *friend*. I will send Mr. Livermore to receive your answer ; you will never meet such another offer, but do as you judge proper.—So saying, she left me with an air of displeasure and contempt.

Soon

Soon after, Mr. Livermore came, and with all his affectation and grimace declared a passion for me, and renewed his proposal. To have mentioned a virtuous motive of refusal, would have been to speak an unknown language to him, and have brought upon me the ridicule and contempt of the whole Society: I therefore told him, as plainly as I dared, that his person was not agreeable to me.—Ah, Madam, said he, am I then so unfortunate as not to please you? There are those that—Excuse my sincerity, Sir, said I, but I would rather *give myself* to a ploughman, than *sell myself* to a prince.—He shrugged, sighed, bowed—*Ah crudele, ingrato, tyranno! adio, mio Caro!*—He danced out of the room backwards; and, though my mind was strongly agitated, I could hardly restrain my laughter till he was out of sight; but I have been serious enough ever since.

I see no prospect of recovering my bond; fatal gift, too dearly purchased! I am distressed how to act; I am afraid of Lady Belmour, and I know not how to escape from her at present; yet I resolve to embrace the first opportunity of leaving her. I beg, Sir,

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that you will give me your advice ; my situation is critical, and cannot long continue as it is.

You are very ingenuous, said I ; I am honoured by your confidence, and I will not abuse it. I am this moment thinking how I can be of service to you. Lady Belmour thinks there is an understanding between you and me ; let us encourage this notion, it will prevent her forming other connexions for either of us. I shall enjoy great pleasure in deceiving her penetration, and at the same time assisting you. I shall own myself your *protector* ; under this character I will demand your bond of her ; when you have it in your possession, you may employ it as you think best. We will leave this house together ; you shall pursue your own schemes, and you may depend upon my friendship, and further assistance, if necessary ; for it is incumbent on me to convince you, it was not *merely curiosity* that made me take a part in what concerns you.

She looked down, bowed, blushed, and hesitated ; at last she spoke,—Oh, Sir ! you are too good and too generous, to deceive or
impose

impose on any person ; I am infinitely obliged for your good opinion, and for the friendship you offer me : but, alas, Sir ! neither you nor I can impose on Lady Belmour : she is as cunning as Lucifer ; sometimes I think she can read what passes in the hearts of people. She will discover your artifice, and will either contrive to separate us, or else she will endeavour to bring our *supposed* connexion to *reality*. I warn you of it *now*, Sir, lest you should hereafter think me in any degree accessary to her designs.—My good girl, said I, I am pleased with your generous frankness ; it confirms my intention ; only take *your* part in it, and I will take all the blame that happens to myself ; give me your hand upon it.—She did so.—Let us begin our plan directly ; we will walk together in sight of the house.—Oh, Sir, said she, you are not aware of the dangers of this scheme ; if we are seen together, Lady Belmour will have her plots against us.—Let her see us, said I ; let them all see us, and make their remarks, it will forward my design.—But, Sir, if Mr. Livermore should resent?—I should be *diverted*, and would

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make him an object of entertainment to all the society; but I know he dares not.

She came reluctantly into my scheme. I took her hand, and led her in sight of the house; we were soon observed, and shewn to the rest. They called us to breakfast; I led her to the company. We had looks, nods, and winks, thrown at us from all quarters. Lady Belmour seemed in *doubt* whether to *encourage* or *separate* us. She rallied me; I returned it. She called me Cymon, and asked me if that was my *Iphigene* or my *Sylvia*?—No matter, said I, so long as it is not my *Urganda*.—She put up her lip. Mrs. Crosby took my part; she made Lady Belmour laugh off her anger. These sober fellows, said she, when their hearts are touched the first time, are dragons in love and assurance.

Finding me steady and undaunted, she wished me joy on the discovery that I had a *heart*. I thanked her; and said, I hoped she would let *me* have the *credit* of the discovery. The rest congratulated me and Suke; she looked confused and uneasy.

Mr.

Mr. Livermore looked disdainfully at us, and turned all his attentions to Miss La Nouë, who received them graciously. After the first opening, they let us enjoy our conversations quietly.

This was my situation when you wrote me your first letter. I answered you, that, though in the land of vice, I was engaged in the service of virtue; since that time, circumstances have varied continually. I will soon send you the sequel of my adventures here, which grow every day more interesting.

I will now close this paquet, and send it under a cover.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

E. SAVILLE.

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LETTER XI.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON, in
Continuation.

AFTER this project of mine had taken place, I took a part in several parties of pleasure, and made Sukey my companion in them. One day that we had been on an excursion, Lady Belmour met us at our return with a note in her hand, which she was reading.—My sprightly lads and lovely girls, listen to me! You are all invited to a rural ball on Thursday next.—We all gathered round her, and begged to know to whom we were obliged for this invitation.

A gentleman farmer in the next parish, said our lady, Mr. A. Collins by name, is lately come to the possession of an estate of about two hundred a year, by the death of an old batchelor, his very distant relation. This young man has notions in his head, that he ought not to live in *obscurity*, but be *known* and make a *figure* among his
new

new neighbours ; to this *end* he is going to call them together, to celebrate his birth-day : he has done us the *honour* to invite us among the rest, and sends this note, which I shall read to you.

“ Mr. Andrew Collins presents his most
 “ humble respects and compliments to my
 “ Lady Belmour, and all the gentlemen
 “ and ladies belonging unto her good fa-
 “ mily, and begs they will do him the great
 “ honour and favour to give him their com-
 “ pany to a farmer’s dinner, supper, and
 “ dance, at Oak-Hall, on Thursday Au-
 “ gust 20.”

Now what say you, my children ? Shall we go and give the farmer a lesson of good-breeding ? Shall we shew him how to act his part on the stage of life, and initiate him into the mysteries of the goddess of fashion ? what say you ?—What your ladyship pleases, was the general answer.—Well then, I say, let us go. I foresee much amusement, we shall meet there some of the *saucy small gentry*, who have had the impertinence to decline our society ; we will mortify them by our politeness and hilarity, and we shall see some fine subjects
 to

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to exercise our wit and humour upon. Girls, what say you to a gentleman farmer? is there any of you that will set your cap at him?—Yes, I will, said Nancy Elford.

I do not give my consent to that, said Sir George Richmore, her paramour; I cannot spare Nancy this summer, whatever I may do the next.

Be quiet, Sir Georgy, said my lady, you shall not spoil the girl's marriage; thou shalt have him, Nancy, if thou wilt, and I will manage it for thee. I know a *person* that would suit the *Farmer better* (looking at my friend Sukey); but she has thought proper to *cater* for herself, so I shall leave her to her *fate*; but enough of this kind. Well, my boys and girls, hold yourselves in readiness against Thursday.

As we walked into the drawing-room, I said to Sukey Jones, So the poor farmer is already disposed of?—Aye, said she, and it might have been *my fortune*, you find, if I had been more obedient.—Well, said I, let them go on at their peril!

It shall go hard, but I will dig a yard below their mines, and blow them to the moon!—

Fair

A MODERN STORY. 65

Fair and softly, good Sir, said she, you are too adventurous; take care you are not blown up. — I fear nothing, said I.

All the evening after, we practised cotillions, and other dances, in order to surprize the country folk at farmer Collins's assembly.

The morning after I rose early, and rode to Mr. Franklin's. He kindly reproached me with my long absence, and pressed me to stay and breakfast with him; at his request I sat down with him and his family. His wife is amiable and obliging; his children have the rose of health upon their cheeks, and the smile of innocence and peace beautifies their features. I enjoyed the dear domestic circle, and partook of their happiness.

As we were sitting at the table, a gentleman came in whom I had never seen before. He came forward in a genteel and familiar way, saying, — Sit still, my good friends; no ceremony with me, I insist. Mr. Franklin, I rejoice to see you well, and happy with your amiable family. Franklin rose, and took his hand; Welcome, thrice welcome home,

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home, dear Mr. Selby ! I hope you are now come to fix among us !—I am, Sir ! I have brought my happiness home with me, and shall have nothing to carry me from you again.—You are then married to Miss Bennet ?—No, I am not yet so happy. Our dear mother wished us to be married at our own village, and I could not refuse her any thing, but I hope it will not be delayed much longer.—Is Mrs. Bennet to live with you at the parsonage ?—No, my friend, she and Miss Melcombe will reside at the house I purchased lately, and be our best neighbours ; and your family I reckon as the next to them in our estimation.—Thank you, dear Sir ; we will endeavour to deserve your friendship.—I know it, and set a due value upon yours ; but a truce with compliments. Franklin, I see a card upon your table ; have you not had an invitation to Collins's ball next Thursday ?—Yes ; and so have you, I suppose ?—You are right ; and the ladies, are not they too invited ?—Yes, certainly ; but they will not go, nor I neither.—And why, Sir ?—Because Lady Belmour and her gang are to be there ; the foolish fellow thought he gave

gave himself consequence by inviting them. I shall not carry our dear little girls into such company.—Take care of what you say, Sir, for this gentleman is one of Lady Belmour's family.—No, surely!—Yes, certainly. But do not be frightened: he is my friend. This is the gentleman whom I mentioned to Mr. Butler, your curate; and whom he mentioned to Mr. Jarvis.

Say no more, Butler has told me all. Franklin, you must introduce me.—I rose, and bowed. Franklin took a hand of each of us, and joined them;—Sir, I shall be glad to be known to you.—Sir, I shall be happy to be of your acquaintance, if Mr. Franklin will answer for me, said I.—Yes, said he, I will be your godfather to this gentleman, our rector; and the worthy successor to our late excellent pastor, Mr. Bennet.—That, Sir! is the utmost of my ambition, to be esteemed worthy to be his son and successor.—In the course of a very agreeable conversation it appeared, that Mr. Butler was the person who gave Mr. Johnson intelligence of the situation of *one Mr. Saville*, who resided at
the

66 THE TWO MENTORS:

the Island of Calypso. This circumstance set aside further ceremony, and in an hour's time we became friends, and familiar ones too; and the longer we conversed, the more we liked each other. Is there not a something like intuition, which unites two minds formed to love each other, before the body has time to get acquainted? Surely there is; and I felt it at the instant that introduced me to this Mr. Selby.

My heart flew towards him; it longed to call him friend; it wished to please him; it feared it might not succeed—but should and—by his behaviour he seemed equally desirous of my approbation. He told Mr. Franklin he gave him leave to tell me, all he knew of him and his connexions.—I do not choose to tell my own story, said he, but I shall be no loser by that; I will say with the eastern sage, “My tongue is in the mouth of my friend.”—I answered, that Mr. Franklin must also speak for me; and his mediation should be the cement of our friendship to him, and to each other.

I left this company with extreme reluctance, and they were as unwilling to part with

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with me. I tore myself away, and came home but just in time for dinner.

Lady Belmour interrogated me like a school-boy, and I made her saucy answers. My friend Sukey desired me to testify, that *she* knew nothing of my absence or return. I told her, I did not hold myself accountable to *her*, nor to *any body else*, for my motions.—Lady Belmour drew up, and looked stately.

In the evening another coxcomb arrived here, Lord S——, who paid his homage to Mrs. Crosby; she was amiable, charming, adorable! All these fellows use the same language; I am sick of their society. After this ball is over, you shall hear from me again; for this time I bid you adieu.

Yours, faithfully,

E. SAVILLE.

L E T.

66 THE TWO MENTORS:

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E. SAVILLE.

L E T.

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LETTER XII.

Mr. JOHNSON to Mr. SAVILLE.

I THANK you, my dear Sir, for your communications; the sincerity with which you paint every emotion of your own heart, as well as others, is truly amiable. The former part of your conduct is unexceptionable; but excuse me if I doubt the prudence of the latter. The scheme which you have so hastily formed, and begun to execute, is attended with much danger to yourself, and may probably lead you into the labyrinth which you have hitherto avoided; and give occasion to those who have set snares in your way to triumph in their success.

Miss Jones is, by your account, an amiable young woman; her modesty and ingenuousness have more charms for your untainted heart, than all the factitious graces of her competitors. This game of playing at making love generally ends in good earnest;

I am

A MODERN STORY. 69

I am doubtful whether this precaution will come in time to be of service to you.

Be not, however, frightened at my remonstrance; tell me the worst that has happened, and I will advise you how to make the best of it, for you may yet recover, and be the stronger for your fall. If you have attached yourself to an amiable young woman, you will not find it easy to be disengaged; your *compassion*, if not your *esteem*, will hold you to her; you will have planted a thorn in your own heart, and when it is drawn out, the blood will follow.

You are not one of those *barbarians* who can burst the fetters of the most tender of all connexions, and leave a poor defenceless woman, a woman that *loves you*, to shame, to want, and to the insults of a cruel and ill-judging world.

I am not one of those severe monitors who make no allowances for the passions of youth; I know, however, that upon the manner in which these are regulated, depends the happiness or misery of a man's future life.

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A licentious man wanders from one object to another ; he enjoys without love, and he leaves the object without regret.

His heart is corrupted, and his reason depraved ; nothing but a miracle can restore him to a sense of that virtue he has so long forsaken and despised ; without a reverence for virtue, he cannot be induced to go through the severe process of repentance and restoration ; we must leave him to the mercy of heaven, not utterly without hope, but without a probable expectation of his ever being reclaimed.

With a man of a mixed character it is far otherwise ; his passions lead him astray, his reason recalls him back again ; he is more unhappy than the man whose heart is callous to every good impression, but there are always hopes of his recovery : between sinning and repenting, he leads but an uncomfortable life, and he sometimes, by a violent effort of reason, or conscience, recovers his peace and happiness.

But, beside these, how many virtuous men, whose *principles* are uncorrupted, fall into errors in their youth, that destroy the
peace

peace and comfort of the remainder of their lives !

Alas ! it needs not much knowledge or experience to convince us of the weakness and frailty of human nature, and the necessity of being continually upon our guard, lest the passions designed to be our *servants* should become our *masters*, and trample upon the moral duties and obligations.

“ It should seem (says an amiable French writer) that our natural state is a state of reason ; for whenever we depart from it, we are restless, uneasy, and unquiet, and cannot find any true happiness till we are restored to it again.”

If you engage in a state of concubinage, it will prevent your being married suitably to your rank and fortune ; you will probably have children, whom you will wish to legitimate, without the power of doing it ; your heart and your reason will pull different ways, and keep you in perpetual disquiet ; a man can no more be *happy* with *two* wives, than he can serve *two* masters.

Bear with me, my friend, while I set one more consideration before you. You will
call

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call to mind, that this Miss Jones has lived with *another man* as his concubine, which sets her in a quite different light than if she had been *yours only*, and makes it *impossible* for you ever to make her *your wife*, a circumstance by no means uncommon or improbable. Perhaps you may now start at the bare *suggestion*, but you are not certain that there may not come a time, when it will be the *first wish* of your heart; you will then think of this admonition. I do not seek to lessen this young woman in your esteem, much less to deprive her of your compassion; I do not reckon her among those who *disgrace* their *sex*, there is a great difference between a *concubine* and an *harlot*.

The holy Scripture makes this *distinction*, and even to this day it is made in the *eastern* countries; but they make still a greater between a *concubine* and a *wife*; they did so in ancient *Greece*, and they do likewise in the *modern*. I will give you an instance and a proof of this.

Do you not remember, in the Phormio of Terence, the care and anxiety of Chremes, lest his wife Naufistrata should know that he

had another wife who was at Lemnos. You know that a *wife*, who was not a *citizen* of *Athens*, was only a *concubine*. This will *prove also*, that a *plurality* of wives was not so common as a certain *licentious writer* affirms.

I will stop here, and wait your reply, if you are not fast bound in those *soft fetters* which seem light till you want to cast them off. Leave Calypso's Island, and hasten to your sincere and affectionate friend,

JOHNSON.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

ON Wednesday two new members of our society made their first appearance here, a Mrs. Watkins and a Miss Freewill. The former, a little deformed figure, with all the affected airs and graces that render beauty itself disgusting: she was patched and painted, trimmed, flounced, and furbelowed, till, as Farquhar expresses it, you could not see her head for her tail. The latter, a pert, lively hoiden, just broke loose from a boarding-school, with so many natural charms, and so many acquired graces, that it was not easy to distinguish between them. There was however an attraction about her, and I felt a degree of the magnetism, till reason called me to account, and told me they were only sensual attractions, and that she had none for a cultivated mind.

Before the arrival of this young enchantress, I was actually debating with myself whether

whether Susan Jones would not be an agreeable companion for me. I perceived in her a kind of prudery, more pleasing to me, than an open attack upon my heart; she looked as if she wished to please me, and yet feared to please too much; she had lived as a concubine with one man, and I thought might be persuaded to cohabit with me upon reasonable terms. In the moments of cool and sober reflexion, I disdained the vile suggestions, and one glimpse of a retrospect with you, my dear Monitor, put them all to flight.

My first interview with this lively girl turned the scale on her side; my heart seemed to want only an *object* to fix its affections. Miss Freewill distinguished me early; she enquired who and what I was. Lady Belmour introduced us to each other in form: she seemed to wish we might like each other; she spoke well of each to the other; and told me that Miss Freewill had a very handsome fortune.

I understood that this young hoiden had eloped from the lady under whose care her guardian had placed her, and had taken her

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first step into life under the auspices of Mrs. Watkins, who had brought her to Lady Belmour's, in order to introduce her into the best company.

This fair lady pointed the artillery of her eyes directly at my heart. I perceived her attack, and was upon the defensive. Lady Belmour whispered me—Oh Saville! what an insensible wretch thou art! here were a girl worthy of the homage of thy heart, which thou hast surrendered to that unanimated prude, Sukey Jones.—I was disconcerted; but, recovering, I said, My heart refuses the election of another, it will choose its own mistress, and be its own monitor.—Saucebox! said she, be more civilized, or I shall give thee up to thy fate.—Notwithstanding the airs I assumed, I was not easy with myself. I found myself exactly in the situation of the young Telemachus, in the Island of Cyprus.

“ Je me sentoïis affoiblir tous les jours.—
 “ La bonne education que j'avois reçue ne
 “ me soutenoit presque plus; toutes mes
 “ bonnes résolutions s'évanouissoient.—Je
 “ ne me sentoïis plus la force de résister au
 “ mal

“ mal qui me pressoit de tous côtez ; j’avois
 “ même une mauvaise honte de la vertu.—
 “ Une secrète et douce langueur s’emparoit de
 “ moi ; j’aimoit déjà la poison flateur, qui
 “ se glissoit de veine en veine, et pénétoit
 “ jusqu’à lamoëlle de mes os.

“ TELEMAQUE.”

Telemachus thought on his Mentor, as one departed to the Elyfian fields, and this encouraged his weakness, as being freed from the restraint of his admonitions : but I thought on my living Mentor, and it strengthened my resolution, which before was in a tottering state. I remembered that I had made myself accountable to him, and trembled at the impending danger, lest I should by degrees fall into such a state as I should not dare to communicate to the friend of my soul.

These reflexions awakened my mind, and put me upon my guard both against myself and those around me.

The young enchantress seemed to take pleasure in teasing me ; the rest of the company took the hint, and encouraged her to persevere in doing so.—She asked Lady Bel-

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mour, Can Mr. Saville sing? can he play? can he talk?—They enjoyed my embarrassment. After dinner we all went into the saloon, music was called for—Can Mr. Saville dance?—No, said Lady Belmour, he can do nothing that he is desired or wished to do; do not give yourself any trouble about such an insensible creature, my dear Miss Freewill.—Mrs. Crosby rallied me upon my want of courage to answer so fair a challenger. I started up, bowed, and presented my hand to the lady. I had the good fortune to acquit myself to hers and the company's satisfaction. The Syren danced charmingly. Several minuets were danced. I performed a second with my friend Miss Jones, who seemed pleased with my attentions. Miss Freewill tossed up her head with an air of contempt, for Sukey's minuet would not do after hers; but I remembered my situation, and thought it safer to continue my notice to her.

Lady Belmour commended my dancing.—I hope, said I, I have convinced your ladyship, and the company, that I do not always refuse their commands.—You are a strange creature,

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creature, said she, you can please if you will, but you are an humourist, and are not to be advised. I suppose if I should call upon you to-morrow evening to dance a minuet, you will refuse me?—No, Madam, I will not, if you give me that lady for my partner.—Well, said she, that is something like: I shall try you.—In the evening I was called out to a person who wanted to speak with me. It was Mr. Franklin's servant, who brought a letter from his master, which he was ordered to deliver to none but my own hands: The contents as follow:

DEAR SIR,

WE are informed that Lady Belmour intends Mr. Collins the favour of recommending a partner *for life*, as well as for to-morrow evening, of which you dropt a hint also at our last meeting. It is resolved, on our part, to warn him of his danger, and to assist him to escape it.

The principal reason of my giving you this trouble is, to inform you that there will be some grotesque figures at Farmer Collins's ball to-morrow, who are not entirely un-

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known to you; but you are desired not to know, nor to guess at them, nor their business there, nor to give the least hint, as well—we know—we could if we would—or—if we list to speak, &c.

Perhaps there may be of this party some country girls, who might compare with any of Calypso's nymphs; we will allow of your curiosity in respect to them, for you cannot discover more than you know.

If you behave to our satisfaction, you may stand a chance to know and be known to them hereafter. So wishing you an agreeable partner for the evening,

I remain your faithful friend,
and obedient servant,

JOHN FRANKLIN.

Wednesday afternoon.

I put my letter carefully into a private pocket, and returned to the company: they were inquisitive; but I evaded their questions. Miss Freewill *flirted* with me evidently, and her forwardness was the only shield against her attractions. To avoid the danger of her eyes, I directed my attentions to

Miss

A MODERN STORY. 8r

Miss Jones, who was treated rather cavalierly on my account; I danced with her till supper-time, after which we broke into parties.

We separated early; and went to our respective apartments; reserving ourselves for the morrow.

My next will give you an account of the ball; after which, we will converse upon other subjects, and particularly of my departure from hence.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged and grateful,

EDWARD SAVILLE.

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LETTER XIV.

MR. SAVILLE to MR. JOHNSON.

I THANK you, my dear paternal friend, for your wise and seasonable admonition, it came in time for me; and yet it might have come too late, if something unforeseen had not interposed between me and the dangers you foresaw, which were increasing every hour, and came to a *crisis* before your letter reached me.

I have a long story to tell you, but must relate all the circumstances in the order in which they happened, that you may have the whole before you; some of them are very interesting to me, and will probably decide my fate, and my happiness or misery in my journey through life.

I will begin with the rustic ball, of which I promised an account. It was determined by our Lady President, that we should decline the invitation to dinner, and not go till the evening. When we arrived at Collins's,

we

we were shewn into a large old-fashioned wainscotted hall, well lighted, by a contrivance of fixing bits of clay all round the room, and putting candles into them. There was a great number of oaken planks laid across chairs at convenient distances, so as to make seats for all the company. The accommodations, though rustic, were convenient. Round every candle socket (as I may call it) was a wreath of green, intermixed with flowers, which had a good effect. Our arrival seemed to put the house in a bustle; our host came and paid his compliments, and acknowledged the honour that was done him, in a manner courteous, though awkward. He was dressed in a handsome suit of second mourning, and his hair very tolerably dressed, for which purpose a hair-dresser was fetched from the town of I——; silk stockings, and every article of his dress in a style above his situation, and indeed he looked as if he thought it added much to his consequence. After the first compliments, Lady Belmour, with the most polite and insinuating air and manner, took Collins's hand (which was none of the softest), and

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with the smile of a goddess said, My dear Sir, will you give me leave to recommend a partner to you for this evening?—Collins bowed—blushed—hesitated.—I saw in a moment that the *hint* had been given.—Ma—Ma—Madam—said he—I—I—I—have consulted a friend who understands these matters better than I do; and he has told me, that it is customary, upon these occasions, to change partners every dance; and I intend, if your Ladyship has no objection, to follow his direction?—By all means, answered our Ladyship.—The rest of the company encouraged, By all means.—But Sir, said she, will you not introduce us to the rest of your company?—Madam, said he, I will bring them to you, for our parlour is too small now the company is increased.—He went out, and in three minutes returned, followed by a numerous company, composed of all the principal farmers, with their wives and daughters; spruce tradesmen; and small gentry in the neighbourhood. We saluted them in the politest manner, and desired them to be seated.

Collins, by the assistances of his *friend* (whom I shall introduce to you by and by),
acquitted

acquitted himself very properly as master of the house, and the ceremonies also; he seated our company on one side the room, and the rest on the other; the music was called for, a very decent band; they played a piece or two by way of prelude, and we were preparing to dance, when a knocking was heard at the outward door; it opened, and two couple of strangers made their appearance; the women were masked, the men painted and disguised; one seemed a *sailor*, the other a *farmer* of the lowest order. The latter came forward, and made an awkward bow before he spoke.—Hearing, said he, that Master Collins had a feast on this day, we made bold to come hither to see the entertainment, and to congratulate him on the increase of his fortune, which will be a *blessing* or *otherwise*, according to the use he makes of it. My name is John Bull; my comrade's, Sam Bowling; these girls are our sweethearts; that is enough to say about us. For the rest, we must trust to Master Collins's hospitality for our welcome.—The attention of the whole company was drawn upon these maskers, for such they were. Collins welcomed

comed them with an air of ease and freedom, that shewed he had been advertised of their visit. They took their places among the farmers' families. The seeming farmer made a sign to Collins, and he ordered the music to play a minuet.

Collins stepped up to Lady Belmour: he begged that she would do him the honour to open his ball, and to take out a gentleman whom she thought proper for her partner. My Lady looked astonished at the politeness and propriety of this address (which I plainly understood as a part of the lesson he had been taught); she answered, Then, Mr. Collins, I shall take no other than *yourself*. He bowed to the ground, took her hand, and led her down with a very good grace, and looked less abashed than could have been expected. But wot you well, the youth had been in training a *month* before, under an itinerant dancing-master, and was prepared to exhibit his person in a *minuet*, to the great astonishment of all his friends and neighbours, who stared incessantly, and could hardly believe their own eyes.

Collins

Collins walked his minuet, for it could not be called dancing, but seemed in continual fear of blundering: my lady looked like the goddess of ease and plenty, and moved very gracefully. Any body, unacquainted with her character, must have been prejudiced in her favour. She behaved with such politeness to Collins, as helped him through the part he was acting; and which he performed better than could be expected; he handed my lady back to her seat with great applause; the poor fellow puffed and blowed, and wiped his face; he had worked himself into a violent perspiration, and it was some minutes before he recovered his voice or his courage. When he was able, he asked my Lady to tell him who should be taken out, and he should take it as the greatest favour she could do him. She was pleased with the office, and called out Lord S—— and Mrs. Crosby; they danced a very good minuet; Sir George Richmore and Miss La Nouë; Mr. Morris, and Miss Elford. Mr. Livermore and Mrs. Watkins! never did I see a couple more completely ridiculous; a *smile* or a *simper* sat upon the faces of the whole company. Mr. John Bull

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Bull laughed without fear or ceremony; I edged towards him, to take a nearer notice of him.—*Neighbours*, said he, those figures *there* are a *fine gentleman* and a *fine lady*! they are of use to those who can observe what they see, for they make fashion and affectation as odious and contemptible as they ought to be. Look at them, and then you will learn to despise them, and such as imitate them!—I approached him; Have a little mercy, farmer, said I!—No, said he, I will have none, I am here, like the Clown in the old comedy, to point out folly and to chastise it. Look to yourself, young gentleman; if you deserve my lash, you shall feel it.—Indeed! said I. I will then look about me, and know my company.—Be quiet, Saville, said he, observe your directions, and get away to your own company.—I was about to reply, when I heard myself called out.—Lady Belmour said, I now expect the performance of your promise.—With pleasure, said I; and immediately took out Miss Freewill, whose face glowed with apparent satisfaction. She danced capitally; I did my best, and we were warmly applauded.—This minuet,

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minuet, said Lady B—, makes amends for the last, in a whisper to me.—I bowed, and went back to my friend John Bull.—Will you do me the favour to correct me, said I?—Go your way, and do not be vain, said he.—I was again called away to join in a cotilion, which was not too well performed; after which I went in search for the farmer; but, instead of him, I met with the sailor.—He took my hand; What cheer, brother?—I do not know yet, said I, till I am better acquainted with my company.—What, said he, are you so pleased with the farmer, that you have nothing to say to his companion?—Not till he has introduced me to him, said I.—Avast there! I am his kinsman.—What of that?—You need not be ashamed to shake hands with a *sailor*; mind that, brother: perhaps I could show you a tight little brig under my care, as well worth your attack, as any of those fine-rigged frigates there, with *all* their colours flying.—Perhaps so, said I; but, if I remember my instructions, I am forbidden to enquire too much.—You are very obedient, said he; perhaps it was only designed to whet your curiosity. It is true, they

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they are not to be gazed on by profane or vulgar eyes, but that should excite you the more.—You deal in paradoxes, said I. Show me to the rest of the company!—Not yet, said he; but when the fine folks are set into dancing, I will make a *signal*, and you may follow me out if you think it worth your while.—I shall expect it impatiently, said I.—While we were speaking, the forms were removing, and they were preparing for country dances. I saw Lady Belmour in conference with the farmer, who seemed not to spare her any more than the rest of the company. I got near enough to hear them, and observed that she had the address to elude all his arrows of wit and satire, and returned them with superior courtesy and politeness. I heard him say—The deuce is in the woman! Will you neither fight nor fly?—Neither, said she, but I will stand my ground. I am sure that you are something above your appearance, and I will take my revenge on you for your impertinence, by commanding you to dance a minuet with me.—I dance! I play the monkey! Not I truly.—Harkee, friend, said she; you must either

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either *fight* or *fly*, in spite of your *wit* and *satire*. As a *gentleman*, I can take your reproofs, and respect your intention; but as a *clown*, I cannot submit to them, but will desire some *gentleman* here to turn you out of the room: so now you know the alternative.—There is *none*, said he; I find myself obliged to accept your *challenge*; I respect your wit and politeness, and would be amongst the foremost to pay homage to it, if your *heart* were as good as your exteriors.—She bit her lip, and bade him call to the musicians to play a minuet. I was all astonishment, and they soon had a large circle round them. The farmer danced in character, and made some extraordinary gesticulations; but at the conclusion he assumed the gentleman, and making a bow, thanked her ladyship for the honour she had done him, and at that instant I recognised my friend John Franklin in him.

He came to me soon after.—I have made your governess feel my lash; and I should have said more to her, but her politeness checked me, and her wit over-matched me.—You are the first character here to-night, farmer, said I; but I am afraid you will become

too

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too remarkable, and be obnoxious to the displeasure, and perhaps the revenge, of some people here.—I fear nothing, said he, my motive is my support ; I came hither to keep my country neighbours from being dazzled by the false glare of fashion and folly: I have shewn them the reverse of the picture, and they look upon your lady Belmour with the contempt she deserves.—And do you think you are not known?—I care not much, said he ; but she and her crew don't know me ; nor you of course.—There you are mistaken, said I. You are my friend Franklin.—Hush, said he ; go to your company, or I will be even with you.—I give you leave, said I.—What fine girl is that you took out for your minuet ? Is that your Miss Jones ?—No, said I ; it is Miss Freewill ; how do you like her ?—She dances too well to please me, said he.—How is that explained ?—I would not for the world that a *mistress*, a *sister*, or a daughter of mine, danced so well.—And why so ?—Because she must have lost the *first* blush of virgin modesty, before she could exhibit her person to the utmost advantage. Addison says, that it is *immoral* in a woman to look as well

well as it is possible, it indicates too much. But the morals of Addison are now grown obsolete, and I talk like an old fellow of the last age.—You speak admirably well, said I, I agree with you and Addison.—And do you read the *Spectator*, said he, and dare you own it?—I am proud to own it, and should be more so to be governed by the rules of it. But a truce with moralizing; I long to know your friend the sailor, and to see the girls you have in charge.—You shall see them in due time, Saville; but go now and take a partner, the dance is begun.

I saw Miss Jones without a partner; I went directly to her, and we danced through it: after it was finished, I saw the sailor waving his handkerchief upon his stick. I excused myself to my partner, and followed him out directly. He led me into a distant room, where was Mr. Selby, Mr. Franklin, and the two lasses in masks. I saluted them, and they welcomed me.—I wish you all success, my friends, in your laudable undertaking.—We have succeeded, said Mr. Selby; the young fellow knows his danger, and is aware of it; and the good people of the village

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lage know how to estimate the fine people at the hall.

You have done more than this, said I; you have taught Mr. Collins how to acquit himself properly on these occasions. But leaving this subject;—Have I not a right, Mr. Franklin, to expect that you should gratify my curiosity, which you have evidently intended to raise.—Explain yourself, said Mr. Selby.—It is I that must explain, said Mr. Franklin; but first let me introduce you to one who longs impatiently to take your hand.—So saying, he called back the sailor who was going out at the door: Sam Elliott; come hither first! When instantly the sailor came, and offered me his hand.—This young man, said Franklin, is a kinsman of mine, who is desirous to be better known to Mr. Saville. He is *really* a *sailor*, as I am a *farmer*; so that we can hardly be said to act a part in the Drama, for the characters are our own.

We saluted in a friendly manner, and I then said, Still it remains to introduce me to the ladies. I expect that you make me amends for the suspense you have caused.—

Now

Now comes the explanation, said Franklin ; I do confess that I have excited Mr. Saville's curiosity, but it is you, Sir, that must gratify it. I have given him leave to expect an introduction to our two girls here,

Mr. Selby laughed. Surely there needed not so much ceremony to introduce him to two country girls, whom he must think unworthy of his *notice*, after the Freewill's and Jones's who are contending for it.—Spare me, dear Sir ! said I, I profess myself an admirer of beauty, when adorned by virtue and simplicity of manners. Do not prejudice these ladies against me ; I am no favourite of any ladies here, nor have I any favourite amongst them, but I aspire to the favour of the *worthies* of the sex, and disclaim all other intercourse with it.—Mr. Selby smiled : Hear him, ladies ; hear him ! This is Mr. Saville, whom I have told you of already. Sir, this is Miss Bennet, my wife elect ; I mention this circumstance, that you may guard your heart.—He laughed at this precaution, and then unmasked the lady, and shewed me a very smart and agreeable brunette ; with an intelligent eye, and
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an arch smile, that said, I can be a wag upon occasion! I begged her to think favourably of me, notwithstanding the company she found me in.

She courtesied gracefully and silently. Then Franklin took the other lady's hand, and led her to me.—This, Sir, said he, is Miss Sophia Melcomb, Miss Bennet's foster-sister, and the sister of her heart, who honours me with her company under my protection this night. She seemed to unmask reluctantly; Franklin assisted her, and disclosed to my eyes the loveliest maiden they ever beheld; a fair complexion, dark blue eyes, with long eye-lashes; auburn hair, inclining to the chestnut; a smile that might have disarmed a tyrant, and such dimples as Love himself might point his arrows at; an air of the most perfect modesty, without any *mauvaise honte*; she looked intelligence, delicacy, and sweetness. I stood surprized like another Cymon, and could now have told Lady Belmour that I had really found an *Iphigene*. I gazed so intently, that I paid my compliments awkwardly, and with some confusion. She blushed at my gazings, and seemed to

withdraw from my notice. I recollected myself, and asked her to honour me with her hand in a country-dance.—No, Sir, said she, not after such dancers as you have engaged this evening.—I hope this will not hinder you, Madam?—No, Sir; excuse me, I shall not dance at all.—I am very sorry for it.

I made the same offer to Miss Bennet, who also declined it very politely. They both spoke in praise of Miss Freewill's dancing, and said it was pity so fine a young lady should have fallen into such company. I agreed with them.—Why, said Mr. Franklin, don't you warn her of her danger? does your knight-errantry extend no farther than to Miss Jones?—I do not deserve that reproach, said I; the case is very different. Miss Jones came hither against her inclination; Miss Freewill came of her own accord, nay, eloped from her friends to come; the one is trying to escape the snares set for her, the other is running blindfold into them. To warn her, would be to raise a hornet's nest about my ears.—You say true, said Mr. Selby; but if that young lady is yet uncorrupted, one would wish to save her from

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ruin.—Let the farmer give her a hint, said I; his assumed character will warrant so great a liberty.—I will find an opportunity to do it, said he, in the course of the evening.—Mr. Collins came in at this time; he looked round him, and was surprized to see me there.—He bowed. Sir, said he, you are enquired after in the ball-room.—Mr. Selby said, This gentleman is our friend.—Then, said Mr. Collins, I may speak before him. Pray, Sir, where shall we have our cold COLLECTION? There are none of the parlours big enough for the company.

Let a table be spread in this room, said Mr. Selby, and let them come in parties, a few at a time; that will be much better than the parade of a supper.—Very well, said Collins, it shall be so then.—He then approached the ladies, and asked Miss Melcombe to take a dance with him, leering at her in a way that displeased me. She made him the same answer she did to me.

Mr. Franklin was going into the ball-room, and asked me to go with him. I took him aside.—Tell me, said I, who is that angel?—He smiled.—She is a virgin widow.—

dow.—A virgin widow! You have raised my curiosity, and you ought to gratify it.—This is not the time for it, said he; but I will do it briefly. She was engaged to young Bennet, the son of our late rector; he was a fine promising young man, who died in his twenty-second year; which misfortune so affected our excellent pastor, that though in appearance he was perfectly resigned, yet from that time his health declined. Mr. Selby now enjoys the living he would have inherited; and he is the son and comforter of Mrs. Bennet, who is one of the best of women.

I must ask Mr. Selby to let you into the particulars of the family, and its past and present situation; and you must wait with patience the time and season for it.

I will do so, said I; but excuse my present curiosity;—Does Collins aspire to——To what? To that elegant creature?

So, so; what put this thought into your head?—His looks towards her.—Upon my word, your observation is hasty, and so is your apprehension. Let us stop here. However, I will tell you, she is above Collins's hopes

and expectations; her rank and family are superior to yours, Sir. Let this suffice at present; let us return to the ball-room, I am going there.—Do so; I will only take my leave of Selby, and follow you.

I went back, and took my leave of him and the ladies. He said, I shall be glad to see you, Sir, at the parsonage.

I left them reluctantly, and returned to the ball-room, where I found Franklin talking to Miss Freewill. I kept back, till he made me a sign to advance, and I then took his place. Miss Freewill sitting still! said I, how is this?—It is because I chose it, said she. That strange man has been talking to me, and saying the oddest things!—I dare say they were sincere at least, said I, for he speaks bold truths.

Why he said some things that *pleased* me, some that *mortified* me, and some that *frightened* me. Do you think I may believe him? What is your opinion of him!

I think he assumes a low character, in order to be of service to some persons in this company.—So I thought; for he has a great deal of wit, and as much satire.—*Truth*, said

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I, has a *harsh countenance* to those who are *unused* or *unwilling* to converse with her.—So it seems, Sir; for he tells me that I dance *too well*, and he does not like me for it; that it is immoral for a woman to dress too much, and to display her charms to all the world. He told me that I kept very bad company, and that, as a friend, he advised me to leave it as soon as possible. He said, I suppose you expect to be married? Let me tell you that no man in his senses would marry a woman that had ever set her foot OVER Lady Belmour's THRESHOLD. He made me some compliments, but they were mixed with reproof; and hinted, that there were snares and pit-falls in my way, and that I might fall into them before I was aware. In short, he gave such a character of the house I am now in, that I do not know what to think of my situation; he said, that *you* were the only honest man in the family, and that I might appeal to you for the truth of what he said; and added, that he would not answer for *you*, if you staid there much longer, for the house was contagious, and the plague was easily caught.—Now, Sir, what am I

to believe? Is Lady Belmour such a person as he describes? Is her house a school of vice and folly? Pray tell me the truth.—I must beg, Madam, said I, that you will make a prudent use of what that worthy man has told you; it is but *too true*.

Lord bless me! said she; I was told she was one of the most polite and accomplished women in the world; and that her house was the *only place* to finish a young person's education.

To *finish* it, indeed, said I; it is her accomplishments and her insinuating manners that make her so dangerous a friend.

Her house is the worst place a good young woman can come to.—And you, Sir, what makes you stay here, since you do not approve it?—I came here, Madam, at the desire of my *virtuous Guardian*; and I continue here to serve a good girl, who is intangled in a disagreeable situation.—Miss Jones, I suppose?—The same.

Are you not then (she hesitated) attached to Miss Jones?—No otherwise than as to a deserving woman. I would serve her, or you, Madam, or any other lady, without
having

having any *private interest* in view ; but this also is a secret, which I beg you not to divulge. You have stepped into the world rather rashly, but this visit will instruct you as much as many years experience. Don't be discouraged ; don't alter your behaviour, Madam ; let this subject rest awhile, we will find an opportunity of renewing it hereafter. I see Lady Belmour's eye is upon us ; favour me with your hand, and let us go down this dance together.—I have but little spirits to dance, after what I have heard, said she.—Keep up your spirits, Madam ; all will end well, and you will be *wiser*, and *better*, and *happier* for the escape you will have.—So saying, I whisked her into the dance where we happened to be, and we seemed as active as any of the rest.

As soon as the dance was ended, we were summoned to the *collation*. I beckoned Sukey Jones, and, offering an arm to each lady, conducted them into the parlour, and seated them and myself at one end of the table. Lady Belmour shouted—Crosby ! look at Saville, with a girl on each hand of him !—They both laughed aloud, and were joined

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by many of their own company,—Joy, joy to you Saville! happy fellow!

This ought not to be allowed, said Richmore. Saville, you must spare one of the ladies, or admit another gentleman.—At the ladies pleasure, said I.—No, said Miss Free-will, I desire no more gentlemen here.—Nor I, said Miss Jones; I desire no other protector.—Protector! said Lady Belmour; who would have thought it?—Be quiet, Lady Belmour, said I, and let us alone! You are hard to be pleased; sometimes I take too little notice of the ladies, and sometimes too much; I expected that you would have encouraged and applauded me.—She shrugged, and said,—It is a strange mortal! I do not understand him.—Let him alone, said Mrs. Crosby, he seems to know his own business best. Saville, take care of the ladies, and know your own mind!

I exerted all my spirits, and distinguished myself at supper. I prated incessantly; they plied me with healths; but I had the address to answer them in fair water for the most part; kept myself sober, and passed for a strong head, and a spirited fellow. The farmer
came

came among us; he made many arch remarks; and, affecting ignorance of polite life and manners, he satirised them in the severest manner. He then remarked upon the alterations in the manners of the lower kinds of people, their absurd imitations of those in upper life, and their degeneracy in consequence. He gave master Collins some *rules* that made him look small; and told him that he hoped he would see enough of high life *to-night*, to make him shun it ever after.

I walked up to him; Enough, farmer, said I! leave off while you are well; this is a night of festivity.—I stand corrected, answered the farmer, and I say no more.

After supper was over, Lady Belmour and her company adjourned to the ball-room, and the inferior gentry sat down to the same table; we went to dancing again.

In the intervals I fought for the two charming rustics, but they were sent home before we rose from supper, as Franklin whispered me. The carriages were ordered at one o'clock, but we did not get away till two. Collins waited on Lady Belmour to her coach. She had an air of chagrin un-

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der an assumed gaiety. As soon as we reached home, I retired to my apartment, and slept away the fatigues of the evening.

On Friday we all lay abed till noon, and breakfasted irregularly; so that we did not meet together till dinner-time. Lady Belmour seemed grave, and in the pouts. Miss Freewill was grown steady; each seemed to observe the other. Sukey Jones very serious.

Mrs. Crosby observed that we all looked fatigued, she recommended a walk in the air: after we had drunk our wine, we adjourned into the garden. I took a separate walk; my two female friends followed me.—I rejoice, said I, to see you together; let me recommend each to the other as more than *nominal friends*; it is my wish to be of service to you both.—Ah, Sir! said Sukey, I fear there are snares laid for *you* and for *me too*: Lady Belmour is contriving to separate us.—I tell you, Sukey, said I, that I will over-reach her. Let her do mischief at her peril! I will detect and expose her. I was thinking of laying a plan for you two to elope together.—She shook her head.—

head.—Sir, Lady Belmour is resolved to make Miss Freewill think ill of me, and of you.—But thus warned, she cannot effect it, said I. My dear Madam, whatever you may hear and see, be assured that my *friendship* for Miss Jones is as *innocent* as that of a brother to his *sister*.—I believe it, said she, and they shall not make me alter my opinion.—Lady Belmour threatens *me*, Sir, said Miss Jones.—Let her threaten, said I; we shall see what will come of it.—You are too confident in yourself, Sir.—What can she do? said I, laughing.—She shrugged, and looked unconvinced.

Miss Freewill said, I have asked Mrs. Watkins how long she intends to stay here; and she says—Why? are you tired of this family?—No, said I; but you promised to make another visit before you returned.—So I will, said she; but I must at least finish my week here.—Very well, said I, you are warned, and that is sufficient. Only be upon your guard, and distrust every thing that Lady Belmour says to you.—I certainly shall, said she.

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Mrs. Crosby came to us at this moment, and seemed to be sent to hear all that should pass between us. I talked of the events of the past evening; she joined in the conversation, and kept with us till several others came into *our walk*, and then we returned with them to the great terrace-walk, and joined the whole company.

Lady Belmour looked at me with an air of threatening, yet affected to be extremely polite and agreeable. I saw she was meditating mischief, but I could not conceive what kind of revenge she would take of me, for my cavalier treatment of her.

At our return to the house, we made parties at cards. Lady Belmour observed that I was hoarse. I said, I had a slight cold, but I made no account of it.—Sukey, said she, in a voice louder than ordinary, take care of your *friend!* it is your office to nurse him.—In what *manner*, Madam? answered she. I do not perceive that Mr. Saville is ill enough to want my good offices, or I should certainly tender them.—What *manner?* said my Lady: why by ordering some sack-whey for

for him when he goes to bed, and giving it yourself. I shall obey you, Madam, answered Suekey.—I laughed, and said, they were both too good to me; for I really supposed it was only a jest. I played whist, and spent the evening in the usual way. Finding my hoarseness increase, I retired early.—Lady Belmour said, Do not fasten your door, Saville, I shall see your whey administered myself.—Your Ladyship is very obliging, said I; and, wishing them a good night, I retired to my apartment.

I had a momentary scruple about fastening my door, but I thought it would make me appear extremely ridiculous: she will not surely come to bed to me herself, said I; and I think nobody else would have the assurance to attempt it.

When I had been in bed about half an hour, I heard the footing of several people coming my way; I had laid my sword behind my pillow, in case any of the men should affront me. I expected their arrival with some impatience, and a foreboding of something disagreeable, though I knew not what.

what. Presently the door opened, and Sukey Jones entered with a bason of whey, followed by Lady Belmour, and Mrs. Crosby with a candle in her hand. At this sight my fears vanished; I sat up, and, laughing, said, Ladies, you do me too much honour; I am ashamed to give you all this trouble.—No compliments, said Lady Belmour, I always take care of my *guests*; I have more regard for you, *Saville*, than you have yet deserved of me, but you will know your *friends* in *time*.—I began to make speeches, but she stopped me.—Come, drink your whey, said she. Sukey, go round to the other side.—She did so, when lady Belmour brought a small table, and set down her candle upon it; then pulling Mrs. Crosby by the sleeve, they both hurried out of the room, flapped the door after them, locked it, and took the key away with them, and then burst into a horse-laugh. Lady Belmour called out, Good night, *Saville*! I thought it proper to leave your *nurse* to watch you, and you are both very much obliged to me.

The Devil! said I; his cloven foot appears at last. Sukey sat down on a chair, and

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and burst into tears. I laughed.—Come, said I, it is *well* it is no *worse*; take courage, my girl! do not be afraid of me, and I shall not of you.

Oh! said she, this blow was premeditated; but I dare not say all I think, lest we should be overheard.—Sit still a moment, said I; since they have the key of the room, I think it will be proper to prevent their coming in again. I jumped out of bed, put on my stockings, shoes, and night-gown, and went to the door, which I bolted on the inside. Now, said I, we are safe from intrusion; I beg that you will accept of the bed, and I will sit in the great chair.—Indeed I will not, said she. I insist upon your going to-bed, and I will sit in the chair; you will increase your cold, and the fault will be laid upon your nurse.—Nonsense! said I: if I had conjectured the use she would have made of my cold, I would have concealed or denied it. However, as she has shut us up together, let us at least converse freely. Since you have scruples about going to-bed, we will sit up, and contrive how to baffle the schemes of this old Messalina of ours.

I car-

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I carried the table round to the other side. Now, Sukey, said I, this table shall be the *barrier* between us, a better, I ween, than *Yorick's* curtains were. I on *this* side, you on *that*; and now let me tell you the use I will make of this adventure. To-morrow I will avow myself your *protector*, and as such I will demand your *bond* of Lady Belmour. When that is obtained, you shall put in execution the plan you have hinted ^{had} ~~at~~, but have never yet fully explained to me. Forget our awkward situation; look upon me as a man of honour, and your friend; and as such tell me what you purpose to do with yourself.

After some prefacing, she told me she had a friend, the widow of a master's mate in the navy, who, being left with a small sum of money, and three children, set up a sloop-shop in the Borough of Southwark; that she had many friends in the navy who had made it a point to buy of her; that her business was considerable, and she wanted an assistant; that she had offered to take her as a partner, if she could bring two hundred pounds into the business.—If I get my bond, said she, I intend to put the two hundred into this partnership,
and

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and with the rest buy stock into the three per cents, which I am told is the best way of employing it.—Very well, said I, you have thought very prudently how to dispose of it, and if you want any further assistance call upon me, for I am resolved to be your *friend*, in every *good sense* of the word.—God reward you, Sir, said she; but how shall I get away from this house?—Leave that to me, said I, I will contrive an elopement for you, and be thought innocent of it myself.—You promise well, said she, and I shall wait the performance. And now I will tell you as much as I know of Lady Belmour's intentions. She has told me several times that I was not open enough to her; that there was something *mysterious* in your attachment to me, and threatened that she would know before long what terms you and I were upon. Since Miss Freewill came hither, she has been still more displeased with me. She told me, what indeed every body sees, that Miss Freewill has a partiality for you, Sir; and said, that if I had not been in the *way*, you would have devoted yourself to her. She hinted, that she wished to promote a marriage between

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tween you, which would have been greatly to your advantage, had not such a *little paltry slut* as I stood in the way of her designs for you.

That she believed your cavalier behaviour to *her* was owing to *me*; that she was certain you had imbibed a *prejudice* against her, and that it could proceed from nobody but *me*. She concluded with saying, that she would oblige you to declare yourself shortly; if you preferred me to Miss Freewill, every body should see and bear witness to it; if not, you should set me at liberty to receive other proposals; but that neither of us should deceive *her*, nor yet treat her *impertinently*; and threatened a punishment for us both. You now see how she has executed her scheme, or at least a part of it; and it will be wisdom in you to guard against what remains.— Upon my word, Sukey, said I, Lady Belmour is a scholar of *Machiavel's*; and she has brought me into such a situation, that I can no longer remain indolent in her house; she has found me employment, and I will begin this coming day to execute *my* plan of operations, if you will promise to second me?—

me?—That I will, Sir; for you give me hope that my deliverance makes me a part of it.—It does, said I; but in the mean time it would not be amiss that we *slept* upon our designs. Here we began to compliment about the *bed* and the *chair*. At last I agreed to her proposal; left her in the chair, and threw myself upon the bed, but sleep would not pay either of us a visit. I got up again, resumed our conference, gave her her *cue* for the following day, and waited impatiently for its approach. As soon as the dawn appeared, I opened the shutters towards the East, and we both paid our homage to the rising sun; admired his beauty and magnificence, and did not forget our orisons to the Power who created that glorious luminary. This rising sun shall bear witness to our virtuous friendship, said I, and remember it is to *last* as *long* as our *lives*!

She said every thing grateful and generous.—Your friendship, Sir, will impel me to endeavour to deserve it; let me but escape from this house, and I shall be happy.

We chatted upon various subjects till eight o'clock, at which hour Lady Belmour rapped
at

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at the door. I demanded, Who is there?—A *friend*, said she: come, rise, and prepare for breakfast!

I *winked* at Sukey, to give her her *cue*. We shall not come down to breakfast, said I; indulge us so far as to send it into the room.—Oh, very well, said she, laughing, I will do so, whenever you choose to have it.—In half an hour, said I, we will be ready for it.—She went laughing away to make her report.—Now, Sukey, said I, set yourself in order, that you may not appear to have sat up all night. I will receive company in my night-gown; and pray let us receive their compliments with a good grace.—Sukey shook her head, and looked *silly*; I did not look *over-wise*. When I heard the tramping of feet in the gallery, I unbolted the door; and in came Lady Belmour, Mrs. Crosby, and a servant maid, who brought the breakfast equipage.

They both *congratulated* us *maliciously*, and enquired after my *cold*, which was rather worse than better. They laughed, and said a thousand impertinent things. I saluted them both, and answered them in their own way.

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way. At length they retired, saying, Get your breakfast, and we will return again.—Lady Belmour said, I have a *nuptial* present for you.—So, so, said I, the bond is coming.—Phoh, said she, somebody else is coming.—Presently entered a servant with Miss Jones's portmanteau, hat-box, and all the rest of her paraphernalia. I burst out a laughing; Bag and baggage, said I.—I cannot laugh, said she; it is a very *serious* affair.—I will make it a *jest* before I have done, said I, and so shall you; come, eat your breakfast, child!—I have no stomach to eat, said she: what will this end in?—I said every thing to encourage her, but she could not refrain from tears.—Clear up your countenance, said I, here comes our *governess*.—She came in with Mrs. Crosby, and, approaching Sukey, said, I rejoice that you two are come to a right understanding. And now, Madam Sukey, I will restore the *bond* you have behaved so impertinently about; and I choose to do it before Mrs. Crosby, that she may *bear witness* I never intended to *rob* you of it. And *you*, Sir, be pleased to know, that this *prude* received this
from

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from Lord C——, as a *consideration* for four months *cobabitation*.

Poor Sukey could not stand this attack; she burst into tears, and withdrew to the opposite window. I took the bond from Lady Belmour, lest she should withdraw it.—Have a little mercy, Lady Belmour, said I; Sukey has never *deceived* me, nor concealed any thing it concerned *me* to *know*.—Very well, Sir, then I hope you will *reward* her *virtue* (with a sneer she spoke it), by making her a handsome allowance.

Sukey, said I, will you leave that to me, or shall Lady Belmour make the terms? She took courage to speak:—Sir, I acknowledge your protection, and I trust to your generosity in all things.

Then you are a fool, child; but no matter, you will know the world better than to trust it hereafter; and you have behaved so *impertinently* in the *last affair*, that I do not desire to be your *trustee* again. But, Sir, I expect a *present* myself upon this *occasion*, said she.—I have *one* in *store* for you, Madam, said I; but you must wait a *few days* for it.—Oh, as to that, said she, I leave it, as Sukey says,

says, to your *generosity*. But now things are settled between you, I desire you will not play the fool with poor Freewill; upon my life, Saville, that girl likes you too well!

I hope not, Madam, said I; I have nothing to charge myself with upon that young lady's account, nor will she complain of me.—I had *other views* for you, said she, but you are a *headstrong boy*, and will have every thing *your own way*; I have given up the reins, and what more can I do to gain your good word?—Only one thing at this time, Lady Belmour; that is, order a servant to get my horse ready; I will take an airing before dinner, and I will meet you all at three o'clock.—See, said Lady Belmour, with what an air he commands about him; and I am to take his orders, as a receipt in full for my good offices!—Come, said Mrs. Crosby, be at peace with him; I think he has acquitted himself *surprizingly* well, much better than I expected, I assure you.—Your servant, ladies, said I; I thank you for all your (I hesitated) *goodness* to me.—They courtesied, I bowed; they laughed, I echoed them; they retired, and I execrated them in suitable language.

Sukey

Sukey cried out, Hush! *pray* speak low! they will overhear you!—Fear nothing, said I. Excuse me, Madam, I must dress this moment; I am going out to do you service, and extricate myself out of the snares these *devils* incarnate have spread for me.

While I was dressing, I gave her instructions for her behaviour.—And what, said she, must I say to Miss Freewill? I cannot look her in the face.—*Apropos*, said I, I will write a *note* to her, and do you find an opportunity to give it her. I took my pen, and wrote as follows:

“Notwithstanding appearances, believe all that was said to you the evening before last, —distrust those of whom you have been warned; a few days will explain what now appears inexplicable: respect virtue and her friends; there is nothing else upon earth respectable. OBERON.”

Having folded and sealed this note, I bad Sukey good-morrow; and went down stairs, through the hall, and into the stable; mounted my horse, and rode to Franklin's as fast as possible. I made haste to tell my friend
all

all that had past since we met at Collins's assembly. He frequently interrupted me by his jest and raillery; and when I came to the latter part, he pretended not to believe that I had spent the night so innocently with the lady as I assured him I had.

His remarks and enquiries raised my anger, and I began to swear to the truth of my assertions.—Hear me, said I, and be convinced of my veracity: Miss Jones and myself are both resolved to leave Lady Belmour's; but if we go together, you and all the world will believe our connexion. I want therefore to favour her escape, and to stay some time in this neighbourhood. I hoped to have found you ^{ready} enough my friend to assist me in this design, but your behaviour discourages me: though I have spent one night very disagreeably, I will not promise to spend many in the same manner. Am I to look upon you as my friend or not? This affair will decide the question once and for ever.

He took my hand, and assumed a serious air.—My friend, you have taken my raillery too seriously; I *admire*, I *applaud* your con-

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duct, and will do every thing in my power to assist you in this affair. Listen to me in your turn ! I will send my servant to I——, to take a place in the stage for Miss Jones, for any day that you shall appoint, and then you must contrive the manner of her escape ; I will lend you a servant, with a double horse, to convey her to I——, and you shall command me in any thing further that is for your service. Now are you satisfied with me?

I embraced him. Forgive me, dear Franklin, and accept my thanks ! Let your servant go this day and take a place for to-morrow ; this night I will favour her escape, and to-morrow I will look out for a lodging for myself.—I will recommend you to one, said Franklin.—You will oblige me infinitely, said I ; a clean bed-chamber, and the use of a parlour, will be sufficient.—There is such an one at your service, under this roof ; and you will do me a favour by accepting it.—Dear friend, I thank you ; but I cannot give you the trouble, unless you will allow me to make you an *acknowledgment*.—Don't affront me, Mr. Saville ! I can afford

afford a *shelter* for my friend, and his company shall repay me. Beside, I shall share in the disappointment of Lady Belmours's snares, and enjoy *her mortification*.

I shall communicate my pleasure to my friend Selby : I shall introduce you to a worthy family, and you shall share in my joys and comforts ; you deserve the friendship and applause of all good men for your noble behaviour ; we will laugh at Lady Belmour, and enjoy our triumph over her.

I was transported with joy at the prospect he opened to me, and saw in the back ground more than was *expressed*. I talked over my scheme of departure with new spirits, and seemed to tread upon air. I was impatient to return, that I might prepare for the execution of it. In short, I went back another man from what I came thither ; got home within my time, drest, and prepared to meet the company at dinner. I came among them with an air of gaiety and humour, answered all their *railleries*, made my repartees with spirit and vivacity. They complimented me upon the alteration in my behaviour ; and Lady Belmour was effectually

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deceived, and enjoyed her success. Miss Freewill looked serious, and seemed to doubt every thing and every body : I paid her particular attention, without neglecting Miss Jones, who seemed to take good omens from my apparent cheerfulness.

Before we rose from table, I was told that a person desired to speak with me. I went out directly ; it was Franklin's servant. He told me he had taken a place in the stage for London, and asked what time and place he should attend me with a double horse. I made him follow me to a place nearly under the window of my apartment, and ordered him to mark the place, and be there by dawn of day. The stage was to set out at six, and I allowed two hours for them to reach it. I bade him be diligent and secret, and I would reward his care and trouble.

I sent him off without letting him enter the house a second time. I went back to the company.—Whom have you had to speak with you, Saville ? said Lady Belmour.—A servant of Mr. Franklin's, said I.—Oh ! that is a *new* acquaintance of yours, said she.—No, said I, it is more than seven

weeks

weeks old.—A *farmer* in this neighbourhood ! said she.—A *gentleman* by *birth* and education, said I ; a *farmer* by *accident*, or rather by *good fortune* ; a *friend* of *mine* by *choice* and *election*.—She gave her head a toss, and looked disdain. I went on,—My *friend* reproaches me kindly for giving him so little of my company ; he desires to see me to-morrow.—And do you go ? said she.—I believe I shall, said I ; but I have not made an absolute promise.—You are quite a *monarch*, said she ; your will is your law.—Not *absolutely*, said I ; it is restrained by the laws of humanity and civilization, as *all kings* ought to be.

You will submit to no laws but your own, said she ; and I must leave you to them, or have done with you.—I made her no further reply. We soon after rose from table, and began to break into parties ; I took Miss Jones's hand, and led her aside.—Sukey, said I, be cheerful ; the *hour of deliverance* is at *hand*.—Is it *indeed* ? said she. How soon ?—This night is the last that you stay in this house, unless it is your *choice* to continue in it.—How can you make such a sup-

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position ?

position? said she. — I smiled, and whispered her. Take an opportunity of retiring up stairs, pack up your things, and get ready to depart. — She answered, I understand you, Sir, and will *obey you* presently. — Lady Belmour caught her word. — *Obedient creature!* said she. — Sukey blushed, and withdrew. I took no notice, but proposed a walk as usual. Miss Freewill avoided me, and seemed in the pouts. The rest of the company walked, conversed, romped in pairs, some danced upon the terrace, and every one amused himself as he pleased.

Miss Jones came down to tea; we made parties at cards; I took an opportunity to whisper her, Retire unobserved after supper. — I was more lively than common. Lady Belmour took notice of my behaviour, and seemed pleased with me. I made several *ironical compliments* to her and Mrs. Crosby; they retorted with equal *sincerity* at least; wit and gallantry flew about. I was more at ease than I had yet appeared, and they seemed surprized at my pleasantry. After supper, Sukey observed my directions. Lady Belmour observed her retiring: she winked at Mrs.

Mrs. Crosby.—I fancy, Saville, said she, you will hear from Mr. Munden soon; I wrote to him this day, to let him know how happy we all are.—I have no doubt of your Ladyship's good offices upon all occasions, said I; there will soon come a *time* when I shall shew my *gratitude* in a *proper* manner.—Nobody doubts your *generosity*, said she; and I see that all your *other* good qualities are ripening to perfection.—I bowed. Spare me, Madam, I am already TOO MUCH indebted to you.

She exulted in her supposed success, and I said every thing that could lull her into security. After some time I rose up to retire. I whispered Lady B——, You will have no occasion to lock us in to-night.—I believe you, said she, laughing.—I took a candle and went away, leaving them in a roar of laughter at my expence. My companion had been fully employed in preparing for her journey. When I went into the chamber, I observed that the key was taken away. I asked Sukey who had it?—Myself, said she; I took care of that six hours ago.—That is well, said I; give it me now.—I took it, and

locked the door on the inside.—Now, said I, we are safe. I insist upon it, that you lie down upon the bed, and take a sleep; I will nod in the great chair, and be ready to wake you at the hour appointed: after you are gone, I will take my repose.—We had a contest upon this point, but at last she consented to take some rest. I took a book and read for some time; at last I fell asleep, and did not awake till between two and three o'clock. I then opened the window, and looked for day-light. I unlocked and unbolted the door; the noise awakened my friend; she feared we were discovered; I soon quieted her mind; she rose and got ready for her journey.—Now, Sukey, said I, a little *critical courage* is required; the opening the hall-door is all that I am in pain about; you must assist me with your hand, if necessary.—Soon after, our attendant appeared; he whistled softly. I beckoned with my hand, and pointed to the door. Now for it, said I. She trembled like a leaf; I encouraged her, but I felt a very disagreeable sensation myself. We took off our shoes; I took the candle and went first. Follow me boldly, said

said I. Down stairs we went; she carried our shoes in her hand. We came to the hall-door; she took the candle, and I went to work to take down a large iron bar without noise; it was not a very easy job, but at last I effected it. I made some noise in unlocking the door.—We shall be heard, said she.—No matter, said I; you shall return no more, and I fear nothing for myself.—I opened the door, and beckoned our assistant. Now, Sukey, said I, sit you down, and compose yourself; Robin and I will go up stairs again and bring down your baggage. She would not be persuaded, but went out of the house directly, and stood by the horse, holding the bridle. Robin and I went and fetched her baggage, creeping along like housebreakers. While he was cording the portmanteau, and fastening it upon the horse, I took an affectionate farewell of my friend Sukey, and touched her lips, the *first* and *last* time; for then, as Yorick says, the victory was compleat. Take this pocket-book for my sake, said I, the contents will be of service upon your journey. There is also a direction to my attorney, who will ne-

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gotiate your *bond* for you, and employ your money : there is a letter for him, which you must send to the penny-post. God bless you, and adieu !

The grateful girl could not speak for tears; she kneeled down, she embraced my knees, she lifted up her clasped hands to heaven, and looked a blessing upon me, but she could not articulate a word. Robin mounted his horse ; I lifted Sukey upon the pillion, shook her hand, and bade her once more adieu. I told Robin to go softly, and attend to the lady's orders, and then return and appear at the same window, and I would make him a sign to retreat or advance.

I then returned into the house, fastened the door as before with some difficulty, and then retired to my apartment unheard and unseen, bolted my chamber-door, and threw myself upon the bed, where I slept till past seven o'clock ; when I was awakened by one of the servants, who asked when and where I would breakfast? I bade her bring the breakfast up stairs in half an hour : I then rose, drew the curtains all round the bed, and waited the maid's arrival. When I let her
in,

in, I made signs that the lady was asleep, and must not be disturbed. I told her to order the servant to saddle my horse directly, and I would ride out as soon as I had breakfasted.

I had intended to send my portmanteau to Franklin's by Robin, but had over-slept myself, and missed the opportunity. I dressed myself, put necessaries for present use into my pocket, packed up my portmanteau, and locked it; then wrote a card and put upon it, with this inscription, 'To be sent to Mr. Saville, by a person who will come for it.' I wrote also, upon a piece of paper which I left upon the table, in a larger hand than common,

'This is to certify whom it may concern, that Miss Jones is gone to London, and that Mr. Saville is to be found at Mr. Franklin's in the village of S——.'

I then went down stairs very composedly; the ladies were not stirring; but I saw several of the men, and wished them a good-morrow: they returned it, and I went into the stable, mounted my horse, and rode to Franklin's; diverting myself by the way with the surprise, and Lady Belmour's resentment at

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losing two of her *scholars*, who had run away from her *school*.

Franklin was at breakfast; he laughed heartily at my appearance, with my pockets stuffed out like a smuggler. I gave him an account of the night's adventures, and my own elopement afterwards. He congratulated me in the warmest manner, commended my conduct, and welcomed me to his house, which he desired me to use as my own as long as I could make it agreeable to me.

And now being escaped from the dangers and temptations that lately surrounded me, for which I return thanks to Heaven first, and next to the counsel of my most valuable friend, it is time that I should close this enormous packet, which I shall send by the carrier from I——. You may expect another soon, for I shall continue to write journal-wise, though not with the peculiarity of days and hours.

Congratulate me, my friend; I am in a virtuous and amiable family, a delightful resting-place, after a laborious passage through

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an enchanted island full of doubts and dangers. I am happy in having a friend like you, with whom I can confide all my joys and sorrows, my hopes and fears. Whatever befalls me in future, I hope always to preserve the title of your grateful and affectionate friend and pupil,

SAVILLE.

LET.

LETTER XV.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

I SHALL not wait for the acknowledgment of my last packet to my dear friend, but proceed to give you journal-wise the continuation of my adventures here.

Mr. Selby called here in the afternoon of the day I came hither; we had a most agreeable conversation with him. Franklin informed him of the state of my affairs; and he gave his approbation of my conduct, as you, my friend, would have done, had you been present. He appointed the morrow to bring his *elected*, and her mother, and friend, to spend the day with Mr. Franklin, who desired, on his part, that he would likewise bring Mr. Butler, of whom I have made mention before; and he promised to use his influence with him.—Mr. Butler, said Selby, is a singular character in this age; I will give Mr. Saville some traits of him. He is a man of deep learning, strict virtue, and invincible modesty; of austere manners, but of the most

most benevolent and liberal heart, making allowances for every one but himself. His merit at college was very conspicuous; but his modesty frustrated the effects of it. He is *poor*, and, what is *remarkable*, he has no desire to be *otherwise*: a little, he says, suffices *nature*; and he has no *superfluous* vanities or appetites to feed. He has some *opinions* that are not quite *orthodox*, which are an obstruction to his preferment, but he does not impose them upon *others*; and nobody discovers them by his *sermons*, which are plain and practical; his tenets are only known to his most intimate friends; a *resident curacy* is the utmost of his ambition; and the liberty of a better library than he can afford to purchase, is all the luxury he aspires to. I shall make it a point to procure him *one*, and, if possible, in the neighbourhood. He is very shy in company, especially of *women*; but I shall make him speak, if possible, for I do not know a man who can speak better upon all subjects.

Mr. Franklin now expressed to Mr. Selby some surprize at the delay of his marriage. — It is in compliance with the request of our dear mother, said he; she wishes us to wait till the
year

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year is completed, from the death of Mr. Bennet. I pay her the most implicit obedience; the time of my *noviciate* is nearly expired, and I hope within a month to be the husband of my dear Anna Maria, and the happiest of men. In the mean time I am repairing the parsonage, and preparing to receive its mistress. My regard for her is of such a nature, as will, I trust, rather increase than diminish with time and age; may we be as happy as her excellent parents were! and I cannot wish for greater earthly happiness; but may it continue longer unbroken!—Our friend here, said Franklin, has shewn much curiosity concerning the *Bennet family*, and still more about Miss *Melcombe*. I have promised to use *my* interest with you, Sir, that it may be *gratified*.—Selby smiled. I must first use *mine* with Mrs. *Bennet*. But let Mr. Saville see a little more of us; he can hardly tell at present whether he likes us or not.—I declared that I could tell it with as much certainty as if we had been acquainted for twenty years.

Many lively things passed between Franklin and Selby; and I thought the evening too short,

short, though I wished impatiently for the morrow ; and the night seemed as much too long. Mrs. Franklin is a good wife and mother ; she is not a shining character in the *conversation* way, but she is all that a man ought to wish for in domestic life ; an excellent manager without any ostentatious *display* of it ; elegantly *neat*, without being a *slave* to her *house* and *furniture* ; every thing stands in the *right* place ; every thing is brought in the *right* *season* ; you hear no scolding of servants ; see no uneasiness in the mistress ; the family business goes on as regularly as a good clock that keeps the time without your being always setting it faster or slower. Every one looks easy and contented, and this I take to be a *criterion* of a well-conducted family. A good and plentiful table, but not covered with incitements to gluttony ; plain food neatly dressed ; good ale of their own brewing, and wines of their own making, which I preferred to foreign produce, though Franklin insisted upon my drinking his port, which indeed was good, but I chose to conform to the family style in every thing.

At

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At length this impatiently expected morrow came, and brought in its train the family I so much desired to meet; the hours seemed to move slower than usual till they arrived.

You will, I know, expect a particular description of these ladies, though I have given you a slight sketch of the young ones, and they shall therefore be set aside till I have introduced Mrs. Bennet to your acquaintance. She is about forty-five years of age, her aspect is intelligent, but the striking character upon it is benevolence, and a sweet complacency in her manner, that encourages you to converse with her. I think I could reveal every thought of my heart to her. She looks like the parent of all that approach her, and the two young ladies look up to her with equal love and reverence; their eyes refer every question to her decision. It would be impossible to discover which is the *child* of nature, and which of *adoption*, unless you were told it, the regards and attentions are so equally dispensed and returned. Selby pays her the respect of a *son*, and she returns him the same attention, or rather *more* than she pays
to

to her daughters, so let me call them, for no children can be more dutiful, no sisters more affectionate to each other.

Miss Bennet is a charming young woman, but Miss Melcombe is an angel. The one you could wish to be familiar with, but the other you dare not approach too near; without pride or vanity, she inspires respect and awe; a savage could not offer rudeness to her; the form of a Venus, with the chastity of Diana. I have not words to express her charms—let the Poet do it for me :

Her faultless form appear'd with every grace,
While beauty sat triumphant in her face ;
Her hair a chesnut brown in ringlets flow'd,
And charms beyond the reach of art bestow'd ;
Her forehead white as snow,—her radiant eyes
The bright celestial blue that paints the skies ;
A guiltless blush her blooming cheeks disclose,
The native tincture of an opening rose :
Her aspect open, artless, and serene,
Reveal'd the spotless mind that dwelt within.

Now cannot I recollect the author of these lines; but no matter, they suit my Goddess

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as well as they could the person for whom they were composed.

Collins had an idea of such a lovely maiden when he described the beauties of Circassia;

Their eyes blue languish, and their auburn hair.

You will think me poetically mad, if I make any more quotations; and yet neither poetry nor prose can express the half of my idea of Miss Melcombe.

She seems rather of a serious turn; Miss Bennet is more lively, though the friends they have lost were nearer to *her* blood, but perhaps not in affection.

But has that fair creature loved already? What then? The object was doubtless worthy of her; yet I could wish she had never loved, and that I was destined to inspire her with the *first* idea of the tender passion. For, oh! my dear friend, I feel that I do love her with the purest and at the same time the warmest passion. To you I have no reserves. I feel that this dear lady is my *fate*. I can think of no other object. I can speak of no other. Bear with me, pity me, encourage

courage my hope! When I can recollect myself, I will take up my pen again; till then adieu!

E. SAVILLE.

LETTER XVI.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON,

I INTENDED to have given you an account of the day I so much longed to see; but my description of Miss Melcombe ran away with my pen, and put it out of my power.

I will try to forget her: no, that is impossible. To exclude her: no, that would be too cruel. To speak of others, and only to mention her in turn,—will that do?

I said but little, for my attention was wholly absorbed. I will try to recollect however some part of the conversation. Every person

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person present was highly agreeable to me, the day passed away too fast. I begged Mrs. Bennet's permission to pay my respects to her. She answered, that she looked on me as a member of Mr. Franklin's family, and should be glad to see me with them. The reply was, methinks, rather ungracious; but her smiling and complacent manner concealed it from me at the time: upon reflection, I do not half like it. Franklin spoke handsomely of me, and recommended me to her favour; she commended his kindness and hospitality to me. Selby had told her of my elopement from Lady Belmour's; the ladies all smiled at the circumstances; and Mrs. Bennet said, The consequences of the action must determine the merit of it; that it was pity so young a gentleman should be left without a guide at his first entrance into life. Selby then told her, that I had chosen Mr. Johnson to be that guide, and that he had undertaken the office. She praised this Mr. *Johnson*, and spoke highly of his character and merits from *report*, for she had no personal knowledge of him. I was abashed at the difficulties before me, for I found I

was

was to undergo a probation, before I could be admitted to the honour of her acquaintance, and received in her family upon my own account.

Mr. Butler came just as we were sitting down to dinner. He only returned the friendly salutations of the company, and spoke no more till the ladies withdrew into the other parlour. Selby whispered me, —We do not usually part with the ladies, but Butler will not talk in their company.—He then tried to make him speak. I thanked him for the good offices he had done me. He answered, That it was not he, but his friend Mr. Jarvis, who had written to Mr. Johnson, and at his desire had informed him of my situation.

I said, I was equally obliged to his relation, as the information came originally from him. After this introduction he went on; Selby drew him in, and made him converse upon many interesting subjects; and he spoke well upon all. What a pity that a man of universal knowledge should lie under such a disqualification. I find it is necessary to converse with *men*, as well as *books*, to qualify a
man

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man for an intercourse with the world : even a *boy*, a *novice* like myself, has more courage in a mixed company, than this man of genius and learning united.

When we went to tea with the ladies, Butler was mute again, and nothing but monosyllables could be got from him. Selby said, I have discovered that Mr. Saville is a good scholar : he shall come to see us at the parsonage ; and, Butler, you shall read lectures to us both.—Franklin begged that he might be allowed to be present, and a day was fixed in the following week for this purpose.

After tea, a party at whist was made ; I took every opportunity of recommending myself to the favour of Mrs. Bennet, whose character rose upon me every time she spoke ; the young ladies threw off some part of their reserve, and were perfectly agreeable.

I considered this party as a perfect contrast to that I had so lately been engaged in. An agreeable woman, whose conversation is seasoned with wit, and bounded by modesty, is an angelic creature, compared with one whose language is indelicate, and whose eyes
assist

assist the tongue in conveying loose ideas to the heart. I compared Mrs. Bennet with Lady Belmour; I looked on one with respect even to reverence, on the other with mingled indignation and contempt. If women knew the interest of their sex, none would throw off at least the appearance of virtue and modesty; a bold woman is shocking. Nay, every appearance of vice in a woman is infinitely more disgusting than in a man; which I think is a presumption that woman was intended to be a more perfect creature than man; and in this view she is entrusted with the important charge of the early part of our education, and of forming the infant mind to virtue and sweetness of manners.

Excuse the digression, my dear friend: I return to my subject. This amiable family staid supper with us; they went away between ten and eleven. The ladies went in a neat post-chaise, which is intended to serve the two families when divided: Selby and Butler were their escort, attended by a boy in livery. The day was too short for me, and the night was but a mental enjoyment of the

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past scenes. I slept not till day-light, and even now I enjoy the recollection at the distance of several days.

In the morning I faunter about with Franklin, and observe his directions to his servants and workmen; I think I will endeavour to learn the theory of this farming business. When I have collected a sufficient stock of knowledge, I may take a farm into my own hands, and live in the same style that Franklin does. If I could procure such a helpmate as I have in my mind's eye, what a paradise would that farm be to me! But I have much ground to go over before I am likely to know my fate with that charming woman! If I can have any hope of success, her will shall be a law to me; and all places, all employments, will be alike to me.

How comes it, my friend, that people's time hangs heavy upon their hands? Is it not for want of a proper employment? I think those men seem the happiest who are engaged in business of one kind or other. Pray give me your advice upon this subject, that I may lay a plan for my future course of life: I believe much depends upon setting
out

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out in a right method ; when we get a habit of doing right things, it is easy to continue it.

Thursday. Well, my friend, I have spent an agreeable day at the parsonage. Mr. Butler gave us a lecture before dinner ; we are going through the classics again with new pleasure and alacrity. Mr. Selby is every thing ; the scholar, the clergyman, the farmer, the gentleman in turn, and shines in all these characters, without affectation, pendency, or bigotry in either. I hope to cultivate a lasting friendship with this amiable man ; he apologized for giving us a bachelor's dinner, and hoped he should soon have a wife to do the honours of his table ; till then, a single joint and a pudding was all he could give his friends.

I hoped the ladies would have met us, but was *disappointed*. Franklin and I returned home to supper ; he remarked my *disappointment*, and *smiled* at it. Selby told me, he hoped I would find the way by myself to his house, when Mr. Franklin was otherwise engaged. I promised that I would very soon show him my sense of the favour

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done me in the invitation. I finish this sheet with my best wishes, thanks, regards.

E. SAVILLE.

LETTER XVII.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

Saturday Evening.

YESTERDAY I took a walk to the parsonage. Mr. Selby received me with that friendly and familiar air which banishes all reserve. I told him the situation of my heart with regard to Miss Melcombe, and asked his interest with her and Mrs. Bennet. He paused, he hesitated.—I wish, said he, to do you service. I believe you are worthy of that amiable girl; *but*——He stopped.—*But what?* said I. What objection can there be to your attempting to serve me, even if it should not succeed?—That young lady's

lady's situation is a particular one ; I do not know whether Mrs. Bennet will permit me to explain it ; I will however ask her permission in your behalf.

You seem likely to be a cold advocate, said I, discouraged by his air and manner. It seems to me that you do not think me worthy of your friendship, or the dear lady's acceptance.—You are extremely mistaken, said he ; I never liked a man so well, upon so short an acquaintance. I am going to give you a proof of it, by inviting you to my wedding, which I hope will be celebrated next week.

You do me both honour and pleasure, said I ; I will be your brideman. But let me implore your good offices with the lady.—I have a thought for your service, said he. On that day, when Mrs. Bennet will grant me almost any favour I can ask, I will beg of her leave to communicate to you the memoirs of the Bennet family, written by Mr. Bennet, and addressed to his darling son. They include Miss Melcombe's history from the hour of her birth, and they will explain the peculiarity of her situation. I will make known

your pretensions to Mrs. Bennet; for I will have no clandestine courtships under my roof. Mrs. Bennet must decide the important question; and you may trust it to her, she will do what is best for you both. You may judge by what I have now said of my frankness and sincerity.—I thank you for both with my whole heart, said I; you have bound me to you by a tie that can never be broken.—After this, I acquainted him with the state of my fortune, as far as I knew it myself, and my determination to bring my guardian to settle accounts with me. We explained our sentiments to each other; and he promised me his friendship and good offices without reserve.

I returned home to dinner, and to my surprise found a card from Lady Belmour as follows:

Friday.

“ Lady Belmour presents compliments to Mr. Saville. Notwithstanding his cavalier treatment of her and her friends, she will be glad of his company to dinner to-day, to meet

meet an old school-fellow, and to receive a packet from Mr. Munden."

I really felt like a school-boy who expects chastisement.—I will not go, said I; let her send every day an invitation!—Mr. Franklin laughed at my distress. I see, said he, she is trying to lure you back again.—And if ever I put myself into her power, said I, I deserve all that follows.

I told him all that had passed between me and Mr. Selby, and he felicitated me on his friendship and good offices. I expect, said he, an invitation to the wedding, and I think it will be a very proper introduction to your courtship: we shall keep you among us, I perceive.—I am happily situated, said I, even to my heart's wishes; but I cannot continue with you, unless you will allow me to become your *boarder*.—We will talk of that hereafter, said he; our *board* now waits for us. Mrs. Franklin complains that our dinner is spoiled; if you were not a *lover*, she should correct you.—So saying, he led me into the dining-parlour, where I apologized for my *stay*. The good lady received my excuse with a smiling countenance; only

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faying, If the dinner be spoiled, the loss is your own, and you must bear it patiently.

This card of Lady Belmour's dwelt upon my mind ; it seemed to me that she was contriving some scheme to entice me back to her house, lest I should TELL TALES OUT OF SCHOOL. I told Franklin so.—Suppose, said he, she should carry you off as her prisoner ? She has spirit enough for an *Armida*, but I fear you have not gallantry sufficient for a *Rinaldo*.—I laughed at the *idea*, and it served to divert us in our evening's conversation.

This morning, as I was sitting at breakfast with my friend and his family, a servant announced a gentleman on horseback, who desired to speak with me. Show him in by all means, said Franklin, laughing, and do not trust yourself out of doors with him : desire the gentleman to walk in. Presently the door opened ; and who should appear but my old school-fellow George Clayton ! I ran to meet him, and took his hand ; we saluted with mutual freedom and familiarity. Mr. Franklin desired him to be seated ; and said any friend of mine was welcome to use
his

his house. Clayton looked hard at me, and smiled.—You look, said he, like the same Edward Saville whom I knew and loved at Westminster School; your behaviour is like the same person: both are different from what I expected, from the account I have lately heard of you.—*Explain*, my friend, said I. From whom have you heard this account of me?—He smiled.—From Lady Belmour, said Franklin.—Clayton smiled again.—What, said I, are you the school-fellow I was invited to meet?—The very same, said he; but you would not trust yourself in my company.—Yes, in *your* company, said I, but not in that of your *society*.

Well, said he, that is kindly put for me.—You did not like the *society* at Lady Belmour's.—Every one has a right to choose his company.—I allow that; but it was not like my Edward, to leave abruptly and unpolitely a house where he had been generously, politely, and kindly treated; and where the mistress endeavoured to contribute every thing in her power to promote his *happiness*, though she might mistake his *taste* as to the true *road* to it; surely she was entitled to a polite farewell,

well.—Would you think it, my friend? this address disconcerted me. I felt confused, ashamed, distressed, as much as if I had been guilty of a bad action. I was silent above a minute. Mr. and Mrs. Franklin left the room to us: *he* threw a look at me, which seemed to say, How will you get out of this difficulty?—When they were gone, I collected myself and answered him. This charge, from a friend and school-fellow, deserves a serious answer. There are certain situations in which politeness must give way to sincerity. Lady Belmour's behaviour *to me* was in *character*; she tried all her seducing arts to *lure* me into a state of vice and dissipation, which she dignifies with the name of *happiness*. Mine to her was according to *my* principles, and agreeable to *my system* of happiness. She attacked me with all her arts; I eluded them with all my skill. Finding that I was no easy victim, she threw off the mask, and behaved with the most unparalleled effrontery. She brought a young woman into my bed-chamber; she locked the door upon us, and obliged us to pass the night together. The young woman was no
volun-

voluntary victim; her situation was truly pitiable. I seemed to favour her design upon us both, in order to rescue her and myself from that school of profligacy.

Lady Belmour *first* laid ceremony aside with *me*; and I did the same by *her*. I left her house *sans ceremonie*, and in a way that I intended should show my contempt of her designs and her principles; and I do not repent it.

Clayton repeated, — Unparalleled effrontery! School of profligacy! Poor Lady Belmour! Poor George Clayton! thou art one of this society so despised, so contemptible; but which can however retort the contempt it has received. How Mr. Saville should have inhibited these opinions, is, I confess, astonishing to me. I suppose some canting Methodist-preacher has converted thee, and thou hast condemned thyself to such society as he recommends. — Stop there, George! said I; you never were more mistaken: Lady Belmour and her society are much more likely to be converted to Methodism than myself. At the decline of a profligate life, people are glad to take shelter in

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implicit faith, and to embrace whatever is offered as a substitute for *virtue*, which requires labour and self-denial; while faith carries them by a short road to the *hope*, I might rather say the *presumption*, of future happiness. Let us avoid this subject; let us avoid contention of every kind. I wish to remain your friend, but I will not be that of Lady Belmour. There are many different roads through life; I have chosen mine, you have a right to choose yours. I see with concern it is not what I could have wished for you; but I give you up to it, and break off this conversation, in which both of us have spoken too freely; let us excuse each other, and part like friends.

Perhaps we may, said he. Let us compromise; but I am sorry to see you so resolute. I hoped to prevail upon you to return with me to dinner at Lady Belmour's; must I give it up?—You must indeed, Sir: I will not again enter her house.

If you would venture yourself with me, said he, I would pass my word for your safe return, and that you should neither be *robbed* nor *ravished*.—He looked arch, and smiled in

in so droll a manner, that I was almost ready to smile again; but I assumed a still more serious aspect. He did the same.—You are going to preach again, said he.—Not to you, Sir, said I.—Well, if I must give up my commission, here, said he, taking a letter out of his pocket, here is something for you; it is from old Munden: you did not learn these precise notions from him, I am sure. There, see what it contains, and whether you have any message to send by me in return?—I took the letter, and read it. I shall enclose it to you in this packet; it contained a remittance of two hundred pounds in Bank notes. I considered a minute, and then asked him to wait a little, while I wrote a note to Lady Belmour. He again entreated me to return with him; he begged, persuaded, rallied, laughed, and tried every art, to no purpose.

At last he threatened me with the vengeance of her Ladyship, for the affront I had put upon her, and also upon my guardian Mr. Munden. He teased me out of patience, and we parted with barely civility; for he refused to carry either letter or message
with

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with him ; and, had I not kept a guard upon myself, he had obliged me to quarrel with him.

He left me very much out of humour ; and when Franklin returned, I related the whole of our conference to him. He applauded my behaviour, saying, It was more difficult to stand my ground against *raillery*, than against temptation, passion, or any seduction whatever. He said true, for I felt myself ashamed of the part I had acted ; and I could not have faced the company at Lady Belmour's, had my inclination led me to return with him : however, I considered what passed between me and Clayton as the conclusion of my acquaintance with him and the whole society.

Upon further consideration, I determined to write a note to Lady Belmour, in answer to her card to me, and to take a civil leave of her and her associates. I recollected that she had been disappointed in her expectations upon my pocket, as well as my person, and resolved to discharge all appearance of obligation to her ; accordingly I sent the following note, enclosing a bill for thirty pounds.

‘ Mr.

‘ Mr. Saville presents compliments to Lady Belmour ; the same motives that impelled him to leave her house, prevent his accepting her polite invitation to dinner ; he returns thanks for the civilities he received at her mansion, and begs her acceptance of the *trifle* enclosed, being the *consideration* which her Ladyship *demand*ed of him in return for her *entertainment* and *good offices*, of which he shall always retain a perfect *remembrance*. ’

After I had made up my mind upon this article, I resumed my usual cheerfulness, and went with Franklin over his grounds, taking lessons of agriculture, and amusing myself for the remainder of the day.

Sunday—I spent in the duties which I had too much neglected for several months past. Mr. Selby is devout and proper in his offices, without affectation, pedantry, or formality ; and you perceive the gentleman in the offices of the divine, and the kind of dignity that secures both the respect and love of his parishioners.

Mrs. Bennet and her two daughters (so let me call them), were at church, and with them another young woman, whom they
allowed

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allowed to visit them, and improve by conversing with them; her name is Grove, a farmer's daughter, lately come to a pretty fortune by the death of a grandmother.—Franklin tells me she is laid out for a wife for Mr. Collins; and Mr. Selby does all in his power to promote the match.

In the evening Mr. Selby called upon us; he delivered Mrs. Bennet's compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Franklin, and their guest, desiring their company to dine at her house on the morrow. We accepted the invitation with pleasure,—But when, said Mr. Franklin, is your happy day?—You shall know that tomorrow, said he. We shall have but few friends present; Mr. Collins will be my other brideman; Saville has offered, Miss Melcombe will be his partner; Miss Grove, Collins's.—Do you know, said Franklin, that Saville had a mind to be jealous of Collins's attention to Miss Melcombe?—It is a proof of his penetration. Collins did actually make an offer of himself to Miss Melcombe. Well, says the Poet,

“ A lover's eye will gaze an eagle blind,

“ A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,

“ When

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"When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd;—

"Love's feeling is more soft and sensible

"Than are the tender horns of cockled snails."

SHAKESPEARE.

Ah! that description is worthy of Shakespeare, said I; but even that divine poetry is not so interesting to me, as the answer that Collins received from Miss Melcombe.—I thought so, said Selby. He was refused, but not with the pride and disdain that many fine women show upon such occasions. He was told she was not a proper wife for him; but Mrs. Bennet commended his intention to marry, and asked him to let her have the honour to recommend a wife to him. He acknowledged her goodness, and promised to listen to her recommendation, but would not abide by it unless he liked the person. Mrs. Bennet applauded him for his resolution. She has since pointed out Dolly Grove as a proper person. Collins thanked her, but said he must take some time to get over his disappointment with Miss Melcombe; and he looks at her, as if unwilling to give up his hopes.—But he is refused, said I?—Selby smiled, he is *absolutely*.—Then I will hope, said

said I? And you have most kindly appointed me her partner for the day of your nuptials?—I have, said he; and I shall, as is my duty, promote the marriage of all my parishioners in turn.

I thanked him most sincerely for his good offices, and for his intended introduction of me at Mrs. Bennet's. He staid not more than an hour with us, and returned to supper at Mrs. Bennet's; but his company in that short time enlivened us for the remainder of the evening. I shall send this packet to I—— to-morrow, to be forwarded by the carrier to you. I enclose Mr. Munden's letter, and you will read it after my scribble. Let me have the pleasure of hearing from you soon,

And believe me always

most gratefully yours,

E. SAVILLE.

LET.

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. MUNDEN to Mr. SAVILLE.

MY DEAR BOY,

YOUR last letter was an impertinent one; but I have since heard, with great pleasure, that you are come to a better way of thinking.—Lady Belmour is your true friend; she excused you to me; she told me you would, in due time, be all that I wished you; she intreated me to leave you wholly to her management.

Her last confirms her prognostics concerning you. She says you are so much improved both in person and behaviour, that I should hardly know you. But you are an obstinate self-willed fellow, and will not suffer her to lead your choice in any thing, and so you have fallen in love as you thought proper, you young dog you! However, I am glad that you have discovered yourself to have certain passions and propensities, and that you can speak for yourself upon some occasions;

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casions; it will give you proper courage to speak upon others, aye upon all.—Well, and so this Miss Jones has owned you for her *protector*; aye, that is the word, and you have owned her for your *mistress*, or your *friend*; for young men are sometimes more precise in their words, than in their actions.—Now mind what I say, Edward, for I am a veteran in these cases.—Let this girl be your *friend*, or your *companion*, or what you please, but don't let her be your *mistress* indeed; keep her humble and obedient to your will and pleasure.—Don't go to make her a settlement, for that is to make her independent of you, but make her more or less, according as she deserves of you.—It is necessary for you to have a *female friend*, to keep you from rambling about, and getting into low company that will cheat you, and hurt your health and your morals.

When you come to town, I will teach you how to manage her; in the mean time I send you a remittance of 200l. I suppose you will want to make the girl some presents, and you must also make an acknowledgment to Lady Belmour; a bank note of 30l. will be sufficient.

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sufficient. When you come to London, I will settle accounts with you, and give up my trust.—I should think a few years travel would be of service to you; we will speak of that and other matters at your return.—I have some interest at Court, if you choose to push your fortune in that line; but don't come with your nonsense again, about public virtue, and public spirit. I tell you, there is no such thing,—nobody loves their country, but for what she is able to do for them. Don't tell me of your Greeks and Romans, they were poor ignorant fellows compared to those of our times; and, besides, they were *Heathens*, and therefore can be no examples to us. I hope yet to make a great man of you, Edward, and then I shall be proud of you, as the work of my own hands.—Present my best compliments to Lady Belmour and her friends; and believe me,

Your affectionate and sincerest friend,

RICHARD MUNDEN.

L E T.

LETTER XIX.

MISS JONES to Mr. SAVILLE.

DEAR SIR,

AS you were my deliverer from a state of vice and folly, you have a right to be informed what use I make of my liberty. I am happy in the situation which I mentioned to you, in partnership with my friend in S—— street, in the Borough of Southwark; and if you should ever come that way, I hope you will honour me so far as to call on me there. Your lawyer was so kind as to advance me two hundred pounds upon my bond, and takes upon him to negotiate mine with Lord C——; and this obligation I owe likewise to your goodness. Mrs. Searle, my partner, has very good business, and she has many friends in the navy. I pass for a widow, and all her friends are mine also.

Constant employment drives away disagreeable thought, and I feel myself happier than

than ever I was before ; and I hope to obtain that peace and *tranquillity* which attends those who are commendably employed.

As often as I return thanks to my Creator for his infinite mercy in rescuing me from a state of sin and folly, and giving me comfortable hopes of peace here, and happiness hereafter, I shall remember my benefactor both in my prayers and praises ; and I will implore for him every blessing that heaven can bestow.

I am, dear and worthy Sir,

Your most obliged and grateful servant,

S. JONES.

LETTER XX.

Mr. JOHNSON to Mr. SAVILLE.

DEAR SIR,

I OWE you many acknowledgements for the entertainment your packets have afforded me, exclusive of the satisfaction I have received from the intelligence they have brought relative to your own concerns.

I congratulate you on your *victory*, and on your *defeat* also, for you are absolutely a captive, though a voluntary one; but I rejoice that you are so nobly enslaved, and hope the lady will keep you *bound* to her for the remainder of your life.

The first time the heart is subdued is commonly the *crisis* of our lives; and the following part takes its character from this event: of how great consequence therefore is it that the object should be worthy of our homage! Were young men aware of the consequences of a first attachment, they would not suffer themselves to be enslaved by unworthy objects. — That vice depraves the heart is as *certain*, as that virtue rectifies and improves it;

an

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an early attachment to a virtuous and amiable woman cultivates and ripens every great and noble quality; an attachment to a bad woman leads to a life of folly, vice, and misery.

I would not wish a young man to marry so early as at your age; but I would have him engaged in a courtship and correspondence with a woman qualified to be in time an amiable wife and mother; I would have him meet with some difficulties, as an exercise to his patience and fortitude; I would have him subdue them by his virtue and activity, and at length receive the reward of his courage and fidelity. What a fortunate man are you, to fall into the acquaintance and obtain the friendship of such a family! and to meet with an object worthy of your best affections, without going in search of her! It is not a very easy thing for a good young man to choose a wife that is worthy of him.—The young women of the present times are very agreeable companions for an hour, for an afternoon's conversation, for an evening's entertainment; but for wives!—look at the wives of the great world!—look at the husbands

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too,

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too, see—judge—reflect! and thank God you have escaped the danger of a fashionable wife. The pupils of folly and foppery are terrible companions for life; if you choose a town-bred girl, the odds are too many that you will meet with one of them. The remains of ancient and virtuous manners are only to be found in the country; the farther from the capital the better.—You *may* meet with the pupils of fashion there also, but the chances are in your favour. I would send those young men I love, into the country for a wife; and warn them not to make her too well acquainted with a town life afterwards. This, latter part of my lesson, may yet be in time for you; and it is not certain that you may not want the former: you have a great deal of ground to go over, before you are sure of Miss Melcombe.

Study agriculture, study oeconomy; both are necessary, both will be beneficial when you are settled for life.

I respect Mr. Franklin, I love Mr. Selby, I revere Mrs. Bennet and her amiable daughters; cultivate their friendship and esteem,

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esteem, my young friend; deserve their affection, and you will obtain it.

Continue your narrative to me; if it is possible, let me know the history of the Bennet family.

Every thing that is interesting to you, will be so to your friend,

JOHNSON.

LETTER XXL.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

THANK you, dear Sir, for your paternal lessons, they can never be unseasonable or unwelcome to me. I will continue my narrative, since it affords you entertainment; and it assures me a return of much greater value, in your advice upon all occasions.

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At the conclusion of my last, I told you I was engaged to spend the following day at Mrs. Bennet's; it proved a delightful one to me. The ladies were easy and companionable; every time I meet them, they improve upon me: I find new accomplishments rise upon me every hour, that add a rivet to my chains, and ensure their continuance for my life.

Miss Melcombe plays sweetly on the harp-fichord; she sings like a virgin of Paradise. Miss Bennet is greatly her inferior in every accomplishment; she speaks French, she reads Italian, she has been taught the elements of several sciences; but she conceals them with as much care as most ladies take to display them. She observes the precepts of Dr. Young, and wears the undesigned trophies of her victory.

Naked in nothing should a woman be,
But veil her very wit with modesty.
Let man discover, let not her display,
But yield her charms of mind with sweet delay.

My proficiency in music seemed to recommend me to the favour of the ladies. Mr.

Selby

Selby plays on the violin, Mr. Franklin on the bass-viol: we played several trio's and quartetto's in the evening, and sung many songs, chiefly out of Handel's compositions; every one seemed to enjoy the harmony, and not to have a wish beyond the present circle. Mr. Selby's behaviour to his bride elect, is tender and polite, such as I make no doubt will continue after marriage.

Her's to him is just what it ought to be; modestly free, without the least affectation or prudery: their wedding-day was declared by Mrs. Bennet to be next Thursday, and all the company present were invited; we are to breakfast at Mrs. Bennet's, and to dine at the Parsonage. Mr. A. Collins is invited to meet us. We returned home between ten and eleven in the evening.

On Tuesday morning I took a walk to the Parsonage: the young ladies were there, looking over the house, and laying out the apartments, and giving orders to the servants. I was permitted to accompany them home with Selby. Miss Melcombe leaned upon my arm; and yet, though I had her to myself, I could not for my life begin the sub-

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ject I most wished to engage her ear to listen to. I trembled, hesitated, and, I dare say, talked nonsense whenever I did speak; she seemed to dread a farther explanation; she talked of country amusements and employments, and professed the strongest attachment to a country life.

I was in Hammond's tender situation:

When from thy fight I waste the tedious day,
A thousand schemes I form of things to say:
But when thy presence brings the hour I seek,
My heart's too full—I wish, but dare not speak.

I suffered this precious opportunity to escape me, waited on her home, and left Selby at the house,—happy man!—and returned alone to Mr. Franklin's, accusing myself all the way of folly and false delicacy.

As I was buried in these ruminations, two men came by on horse-back; they stopped, and called to me by name. It was Lord S—— and Mr. Clayton, two of Lady Belmour's disciples, whom I have introduced to you before.

I saluted them coolly, and was going forward; but Clayton called out—Do not run

run away, Saville; suffer me to say a few words to you, they shall not be of the hostile kind. I behaved rudely to you last time I saw you: I ask your pardon. Let us renew our former friendship!—So saying, he jumped off his horse, and came and took my hand. I gave it him cheerfully, and we walked together, he leading his horse.

Lord S—— said, Who was that *divine girl* that was hanging upon your arm this morning, Saville?—A young lady who is under the care of Mrs. Bennet, said I; but not an acquaintance for your Lordship or Lady Belmour.—I know that, said he, laughing. Upon my soul, Saville, you are a lucky dog! all the girls seek *your* friendship, while they fly mine.—All the *modest* girls, your Lordship means, says Clayton.

Come, Saville, do not be afraid of us, we are not so bad as you think us; we respect those who are *really virtuous* women, though we make free with those who only *pretend* to be so. But pray, my good modest friend, answer me a question that I have long wished to ask you; What is your opinion of Miss Freewill?—I will answer you, said I. I be-

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lieve she is a virtuous girl, but an indiscreet one, or else she would never be found at Lady Belmour's.

I am glad to hear you say so, for—shall I confess it? Yes, I will, to you. I adore that girl! I love her up to marriage, if I was certain——But, Saville, did you never make *love* to her, in *jest* or in *earnest*?—No, never, upon my honour! but I paid her some *attention*, because I thought she deserved it.—Thank you, Saville, you have set my heart at ease; I was confoundedly jealous of you. *She paid you some attention, though—*too much for me. She speaks of you with emotion, and will not suffer any body to open their lips against you.—That is owing to her generosity, said I; she defends an innocent man when he is unjustly traduced: that is all she means, I am sure.

Egad, I wish I was sure of that.—Pray, said Lord S——, what is become of Miss Jones? She is one of Mr. Saville's flock.—You must enquire somewhere else, my Lord, said I. I have staid in this neighbourhood to convince every body, that I have no connexion with Miss Jones.—A *Joseph*—yea, a *Joseph*!

a *Joseph*! said Lord S——; but that fine girl that I saw you lead to-day, who is she?—My Lord, you must excuse me; if you ask me after twenty fine girls, I know nothing of them.—Is there no such thing as getting into her company, Saville! will not you introduce me to her upon terms of honour?—I will not upon my honour, said I, your Lordship must excuse me.

I wish, said Clayton, you would give me a *bill* upon Miss Freewill.—I do not understand you, said I.—A bill of *credit*, said he. Say that you know me; that I am an honest fellow, and so forth.—Not I, indeed, Sir; make your *own credit* with her.

It is a strange thing, said Lord S——, that the girls should prefer a man who is indifferent to them, to one that adores them. If *we fly* them, *they pursue us*.—Aye, said Clayton, and if they *fly*, we pursue *them*; it ever was so, and ever will be.

We came to a stile that led to Franklin's house,—Gentlemen, *bonjour*! said I, and jumped over the stile; they wished me a good day, and went their own road.

I told Franklin my adventure, and worried myself and him with doubts and fears

of I know not what. I wished Miss Melcombe had never been seen by Lord S——; I was afraid lest he should form some design upon her. Franklin laughed at me.—One would think, said he, there was some secret pleasure in self-tormenting, to see what pains people take to find something to worry themselves about,—*your lovers* especially. Surely in such a country as ours there is nothing to apprehend; are we not under the protection of the laws? what are you afraid of?—I do not know exactly, said I; but wherever there is something to *hope*, there is always something to *fear*; and this situation is not peculiar to lovers.

Friday. The day is come and gone, that was wished for so long. Selby is happy, while I am in doubts and fears; however, my hopes rise in my heart's barometer. I am not *hated*, I am not rejected; I have been heard with complacency, if not with pity. We met at Mrs. Bennet's, and breakfasted there, and from thence went to church. Mr. Selby led his bride, Franklin and Mrs. Bennet, Mr. Butler and Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Collins and Miss Grove, Miss Melcombe and your humble servant. There was an air
of

of sedate cheerfulness upon the whole company; but none of the rapturous and riotous joy which blazes for a day and then expires. The excellent Mrs. Bennet called upon her daughter to be cheerful. Some girls, said she, think it necessary to behave as if they were averse to their own wishes. Detestable affectation! You, my love, have learned to despise it; you are going to be united to the man of your *own choice*; to a man of *worth*, with whom you have nothing to fear. It is a very bad compliment to the bridegroom, to look unhappy or reluctant upon these occasions.—I will endeavour to behave as becomes your daughter, Madam, answered the amiable bride.—Selby's eyes spoke his grateful sensibilities; he pressed her hand, and lifted it to his lips; but seemed rather to suppress the joyful emotions of his heart, or at least to restrain them within the limits of the strictest delicacy and politeness. We arrived at the church.

Mr. Butler prepared for the sacred office; Mr. Selby offered his hand to his bride, she gave her's with apparent pleasure. The office was performed; the lady *spoke out* her

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part of it; her mother, by a nod, encouraged her to do so. We all stood round the table. I looked a thousand tender things to my fair partner, and took courage to whisper softly to her, What a solemn office! What sacred words! How sweet to speak and to hear, between two hearts united and consecrated by virtue; they kindle my wishes and aspirations after the same happiness. Oh, that I dared to *say* my hopes! She blushed and looked down.

After the ceremony was concluded, Mrs. Bennet applauded her daughter's behaviour. The young lady received the congratulations of her friends with ease and cheerfulness. We adjourned to the Parsonage, and there renewed our congratulations and wishes for their happiness.

Mr. Selby thanked Mrs. Bennet for the inestimable present she had made him (she gave the bride at the altar).—My future behaviour shall show how dear it is to me; it is my wish and hope to restore the blessings which time has ravished from you, and to be your *son* in every respect; let there be no other name between us henceforward, but

mother

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mother and son.—With *pleasure*, with *pride*, I acknowledge my son! said she. May the Almighty bless your union! You are as dear to me as my daughter; all that is mine is yours, now and for ever!—I have a particular favour to ask of my dear mother, said Mr. Selby, but it shall not be *just now*; she will give me her company *alone* to hear it.—She smiled: I cannot think what it can be, said she; however, it must be a *very strange one*, that I can refuse my *son* upon this day. The bride smiled like an angel, but her joy overflowed at her eyes; her mother embraced and blessed her. She held out her hand to Miss Melcombe, who kissed it; she embraced her.—My dear Sophia! my other daughter! my sister! said the bride; will you receive a *brother* from me? Mr. Selby then saluted her.—Let me be your *brother* at present, said he; perhaps hereafter I may aspire to the honour of being your *father*. Sophia sighed; the tear started from her eye.—How sweet to have a father! said she; and how unfortunate to be forgotten by him!—Mrs. Bennet took her hand. Be comforted, my child; Heaven, in lieu of *that father*,
has

has given you a mother, a sister, and a brother ; and perhaps your father may one day recollect and acknowledge his child. Let us not think of any thing this day that can sadden our hearts.—I ask your pardon, Madam, said Sophia ; I will honour this day as long as I live, for my dear Anna Maria's sake, and I will do every thing to show the satisfaction I receive from her happiness.—Our conversation afterwards became general ; we walked in the garden before dinner ; Mr. Selby took Mrs. Bennet aside, and kept her some time ; after which he came and took my hand.—Excuse me, my heart's treasure ! excuse me, my friends ! I must not live wholly for myself even on this happy day ; I am serving my friend, and you will forgive me. So saying, he led me to Mrs. Bennet.—I have explained your pretensions, said he, to my mother ; you must now speak for yourself.

I did so, but with more hesitation than I wished ; and afterwards I took your last letter out of my pocket, and presented it to Mrs. Bennet as a kind of credential, in respect to my proposal. She read it over.—It is, indeed, much in your favour, Sir ; but I must
blame

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blame *you*, my son, for giving Mr. Saville room to expect to see the *memoirs* of our *family*; you see he has raised the same expectation in Mr. Johnson also: they were never meant to be shewn out of the family.

I do not see how it could well be avoided, said he; Mr. Saville ought to know every thing that relates to Miss Melcombe. When he knows the whole story, he will be enabled to judge *how far* you have a right to dispose of her, and to whom he must apply for his consent. As to Mr. Johnson, you know his character, and I should think you might allow him to see the Manuscript without *one* objection.—I do know his character, my dear, said Mrs. Bennet; and, to say truth, it has less impropriety to trust *him* with it, than to *young* a *gentleman* as him before us.

I will answer, Madam, for Mr. Saville's honour; I know he may be trusted. I pass my *word* for him.

Dear Sir, said I, you are the noblest of friends; it shall be the endeavour of my life to shew my gratitude.

Permit me, Madam, to offer myself as a candidate for the dear lady's favour; I will
submit

submit to any trial, to any time of probation, to any conditions.—But, Sir, Miss Melcombe has a *father living*.—I will apply to *him*, if I may be so happy to obtain your favour and recommendation.

Well, Sir, it is my son's request that I will allow you to see the memoirs of our family, which include Miss Melcombe's history; I cannot refuse his warm exertion of his influence in your behalf on this day. You shall read the papers; you shall send them to Mr. Johnson, and he shall advise you and us how to proceed in this affair.

I kneeled upon one knee, kissed her hand, and poured forth my acknowledgments.—Rise, Sir, said she; do you forget you are not at the feet of your mistress? may you deserve her, before you obtain her!

Mr. Selby expressed his joy and gratitude in proper terms. We returned to company, and our friends' looks told us they were no strangers to our business. I drew Miss Melcombe aside; I made my confession with more courage than I expected; she heard me with complacency: she told me she had a *father*, who had the only right to dispose of her.

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her. She allowed me to visit her as a *friend*, and did not forbid me to hope for her favour.

Mrs. Bennet took Mr. Collins and Miss Grove apart; she recommended them to each other. She seemed the Juno-Matrona; the arbiter and protector of conjugal happiness. Every person looked with increasing cheerfulness, and seemed to hail the omens of present and future blessings.

At two o'clock we sat down to a well-ordered and plentiful dinner; we sat some time afterwards: Mr. Selby would not allow the ladies to retire, till near tea-time; he then told them to prepare to join in a musical party afterwards. We soon followed them, and the time between tea and supper flew away unperceived. We played, we sung; every one endeavoured to promote the happiness of the rest. They made me sing; I chose that sweet elegy of Hammond's, set as sweetly by Jackson:

Oh say, thou dear possessor of my breast,
Where's now my boasted liberty and rest?

I need not tell you how I, nor how the company,

pany, applied it. Mr. Selby recited some of the finest passages in Milton relative to *conjugal* and *paradisaical* happiness. He seemed to be inspired; he said a thousand tender and gallant things to his sweet bride; she, blushing and smiling, accepted them. After supper our conversation turned upon serious subjects; Mrs. Bennet led it, and seemed to design it to check any *levity* that might rise among us. She spoke of marriage as a *divine institution*, and said that the state of the manners of a *nation* might be easily estimated by the respect that was paid to this *sacred tie*.—According to your estimate, Madam, said Mr. Franklin, I am afraid, we are much declined in virtue and decorum.—It is but too certain, said she, the proofs are too many to suffer a doubt of it; but let not *us* be discouraged, it is in every one's power to check the progress of vice and folly, by setting an example of the contrary. There is yet, I hope, a great deal of virtue among individuals; let us cultivate it as far as our influence extends, and then we shall have nothing to reproach ourselves with.

At

At ten o'clock the ladies all retired. Mrs. Bennet and Miss Melcombe slept at the Parsonage: we took the hint, and withdrew soon after, wishing Mr. Selby a long continuance of his domestic happiness.—Let us see you often, my dear friends, said he.—You may be sure of *me*, said I; you have bound me to you for life.—We came away at eleven.

At my return home, I found a letter from Mr. Clayton, the contents as follows:

Dear Sir,

I BEG your excuse for my past behaviour, and that you will grant me a favour, which will accelerate my happiness. It is, that you will speak a word in my behalf to the charming Miss Freewill, to whom I have offered myself in marriage. She thinks and speaks of you in high terms, such as would make me mad with jealousy, if I did not believe you to be in love in another place. Forget my vanity and folly, and do an act of generous friendship for your old school-fellow and friend,

GEORGE CLAYTON.

I fat

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I sat down, and wrote the following answer immediately, for Mr. Franklin's servant to carry in the morning.

Sir,

I MUST beg to be excused as to the credentials you require of me; I am not sufficiently acquainted with Miss Freewill to use so great a liberty; nor with your conduct and character, to be able to pass my word for your *virtue* to a *lady*, though I might for your *honour* to a *gentleman*. However, your resolution to marry, confirms my hope of your becoming a good member of society, and I wish you success in your present laudable pursuit; for, in my opinion, the path of virtue is the only road to happiness.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most humble servant,

E. SAVILLE.

Saturday Morning.

I have just received the precious manuscript from Mr. Selby; it affords me sufficient subject for meditation of every kind. I am allowed to send it to Mr. Johnson.

E E T-

LETTER XXII.

Mr. SAVILLE to Mr. JOHNSON.

I CAN now tell you that I am as happy as a man in a state of probation can be. Your letters, my dear friend, are my credentials to Mrs. Bennet; I am allowed to visit there as a *more* than common acquaintance; I am treated as a *friend*, if not as a *favourite*.

I have been permitted to explain myself; to open my heart to the mistress of it. She heard me with complacency, though not with emotion; she smiled upon me; and checked the ardour of my declaration.

I hope, said she, I am above affectation or deceit. I would not raise hopes I do not mean to encourage; our acquaintance is of a very late date: you are very young, but one year older than myself; your character is not yet established, mine is hardly formed. I have made no resolution for or against marriage. I think it is the most eligible state, and

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and that a woman stands in need of a protector through life : but, if it be not *happy*, it is worse than a single life, because you cannot be freed from it. I think very well of you, Mr. Saville. Indeed I like your company too well to give up your acquaintance, unless there was a necessity for it.

I blessed her for this declaration, and was going to express my gratitude as a lover. But she stopped me.—Do not interrupt me, Sir, I have premeditated what I am saying. It is upon due consideration, and with approbation of my best friend. I will receive you as my *friend*, and as a *candidate* for my favour, but not as a contracted lover. I expect that you will comply with my terms, which I am going to explain. We will be good friends, and remain upon this footing for one entire year from the date of our first acquaintance ; but I will hear no complaints, admit no liberties, no love-sick petitions.

I sighed. Oh Sophia, this is an act of arbitrary power ; this is a cruel quarantine ! but what am I to expect at the end of this long, long probation ?—Oh the impatience

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patience of men till they obtain their wishes ! said she. Hear me out, Sir. Surely some kind of trial is necessary and reasonable ; it is not arbitrary, but salutary for us both. In the course of this year, we shall know each other's disposition, our virtues, and our faults ; is it not better that we should have a reason for our liking or disliking each other ? Mr. Selby waited patiently his time of probation ; and his Anna-Maria had full proof of his virtues, before she gave him her hand ; and when she did, it was without one scruple.

Well, my dear Madam, but at the end of the year what am I to expect ?—Nothing certain, Sir ; if we then like each other well enough to make a serious engagement, Mrs. Bennet will apply to my *father* for his consent, and then you will have my permission to make proposals to him. You know how I am circumstanced ; and I am resolved to perform my duty to my parent, however he may behave towards me. This, Sir, is my fixed resolution ; and, if you do not approve my terms, you are at liberty to reject them :

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them: but remember they are my *mother's* also.

Hard terms, my dear lady! but such as I must accept, if I can obtain no better. I devote myself wholly to you, Madam, dispose of me as you please: it is the first wish and study of my life to approve myself to you and Mrs. Bennet. I put my heart into your hands; but I must hope you will not treat it unkindly, nor chill it with the cold blood of indifference or disdain.—No more in this style, Sir! I have spoken my sentiments, let us now seek our friends.—She gave me her hand, I kissed it; she complained of my freedom. I murmured at her insensibility; we joined our friends, who were apprized of all that had passed between us.

Sophia looked triumphantly; I rather dejected. Mrs. Selby challenged me; What, Sir, are you dissatisfied with my Sophia; if so, I shall declare against you!—I submit, Madam, to her laws and yours. I confess I ought to show myself worthy of the blessing I aspire to, before I receive it.—Very well, said Mr. Selby, then all is as it should be.

From

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From this time Sophia has treated me with more ease and freedom: she encourages me to behave as a friend, but will not hear a word in the style of a lover.

She calls me her friend, but her lover denies;
She smiles when I'm cheerful, yet hears not my sighs;
A bosom so cold, with so gentle an air,
Inspires me with love, and forbids me despair.

In all other respects I am the happiest of men. Mr. Franklin allows of my absences, and bids me pay my duty whenever I please. I divide my time between Mrs. Bennet's, the Parsonage, and my present home. The three families meet one day in every week at each other's houses.

Selby visits every housekeeper in his parish; his amiable wife is the friend and patroness of the poor; they are beloved to veneration: and, whenever they appear, are followed by the wishes and prayers of all that pass by them.

Mr. Selby has recommended Mr. Butler to a curacy very near; he has given him a room in his own house, where he comes and goes whenever he pleases, with free access to

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a very good library, the late Mr. Bennet's, to which Mr. Selby has made considerable additions.

Sometimes we read and converse with the learned, but oftener with the ladies, in the most delightful of all society, where the senses polish and improve each other. Sometimes we walk or ride : at others have musical parties : every new employment gives us renewed spirits, and we never are tired, or wish for other pleasures than our little circle affords.

These, my dear friend, are the true, because the rational pleasures, such as increase by reflection. How empty, how unsatisfactory, are those of vanity and dissipation, when compared with those of *love, friendship, and rational society* !

The ladies are continually employed ; all sorts of needlework, useful and ornamental, they excell in ; and the excellent Mrs. Bennet devotes all her evenings to working for the poor. She lays by all the linen that is nearly worn out in her family. She makes child-bed-linen, and sends a certain number of things necessary on that occasion, with candles

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dles of her own making, to every person round her, who stands in need of her assistance. Such women as these do honour to their sex, and to human nature; may I obtain a wife of this school, as the completion of all human happiness!

I have a letter from Miss Jones, which I enclose to you. I rejoice that she is likely to be so well established the remainder of her life, and hope the former part of it will be forgotten. As I have looked upon her as still in some degree under my protection, I am happy to be relieved from any further interposition in her affairs. But I do not perfectly understand what she means by putting myself upon my guard, and being aware of some impending danger to myself, or those I love.

Adieu, my friend. I expect the return of my packet; and a letter with your strictures upon it.

Yours sincerely,

E. SAVILLE.

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LETTER XXIII.

Miss JONES to Mr. SAVILLE.

SIR,

ONCE more I take the liberty of addressing you by letter, to inform you of my situation and prospects, which are much better than I could expect, or than I have hitherto deserved; but it shall be the business of my future life to make myself worthy of them.

I told you that my friend Mrs. Searle had acquaintance with many gentlemen belonging to the navy, who for her own and her late husband's sake did her services in the way of her business, and brought a great many customers to the house.

Among these came a Mr. Barton, who is what is called a *master* aboard a man of war; a very worthy man, who has got a considerable fortune by the prizes taken by his ship. This gentleman has made me an offer of marriage, and I am advised by Mrs. Searle and her friends to accept it; though she owns it

it will grieve her much to part with me, but she prefers my happiness to her own advantage; and in return, it is my intention, if I do accept this offer, to continue with her in Mr. Barton's absence, and to do her all the services in my power. I have written privately to my father on the subject, and shall be determined by his advice; but I shall not acquaint my mother with any step I shall take, for I know she would think it less honourable to marry, than to live in a *certain way*, which I detest, and thank God am escaped from.

I have one more reason for giving you this trouble: I have heard there are strange doings at Lady Belmour's; that the company there are very much set against you, and threaten to be revenged on you for your behaviour towards them. I beg you, Sir, to be upon your guard; for there is certainly something contriving against you, or *those whom you love*. It was by accident that I heard this; and also that a young girl, a poor cottager's daughter, was taken away from her parents by stratagem, and a fortnight after was seen at Lady Belmour's.

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If I should hear any thing that would be for your service to know, I will not fail to give you information of it. I can never forget my obligations to you, and shall think myself happy if it should ever be in my power to show you my grateful sense of them.

I am, Sir,

Your ever obliged and most humble servant,

S. JONES.

EPISODE.

E P I S O D E.

MEMOIRS of WILLIAM BENNET, Clerk,
and his FAMILY.

AT the request of my dear children, I sit down to write these memoirs of the most interesting events of my life, for their satisfaction, and the benefit of our posterity.

The virtues of our ancestors, are examples for us to imitate; their failings and defects are warnings for us to avoid them. We can only propose the example and the warning; but the right application of both, depends on those who receive them. If the soil is prepared by due cultivation, it will bring forth twenty, fifty, or an hundred fold. May such be the increase in the minds of my amiable and beloved children!

I am descended from a good family, which formerly lived in a state of affluence; but by the expences of our ancestors, and the increase of luxury, was reduced to a small estate, which descended to an eldest son: my father

was the younger brother ; he was a clergyman of the church of England, who united the Christian faith and morals, in his doctrine and in his practice. With a mind entirely freed from superstition, or enthusiasm, he kept in the road of moderation, and thought none were enemies to reason, but those who are conscious that reason is against them. I am the younger of two sons ; the extravagances and profligacy of the eldest (who died at twenty-five years of age, of the consequence of his irregularities) obliged my father to restrain himself in his expences for me. I early declared my wishes towards the profession of my father, whom I aspired to resemble in every respect. A worthy old gentleman, my godfather, assisted him in the expence of an university education for me. I went through my studies there with credit and success ; and afterwards took upon me the office of college-tutor to several youths of fortune and family. Among these was a young gentleman, whose name was *Lucas*. He was bred up at Westminster School, where, by his riotous companions, he was early initiated into all the mysteries of vice and

and folly, which are but too well known to the youth of the present age: from thence he was sent to Oxford, where he made acquaintance with some young men of an enthusiastic turn, who at that time distinguished themselves, and made a kind of schism in that university. They led him into the abyſs of Methodism, which promised him an immediate absolution from his past irregularities. He was taught to give up his reason to the guidance of others, and to rely entirely upon faith for the future. A mind, convicted of sin, is glad to lay hold on any thing that will be accepted as a substitute for virtue; but in a short time after, his reason revolted against this implicit faith; he saw many things practised under the mask of zeal, which staggered, and at last overturned his new system, and he left their society in disgust.

From one extreme point he flew to the other; he read the works of Bolingbroke, Hume, and Voltaire, and fancied himself convinced by their doctrine: he renounced the tenets of Christianity, and became a professed advocate for Infidelity.

In this state I found him: he freely owned his opinions to me. I put into his hands the works of the best Divines of our church, Tillotson, Clarke, Sherlock, and others; Mr. Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity; and several other treatises.

By reasoning upon them, I had the happiness to convince him of his errors in judgment, and to reconcile his reason to his faith; and he once more owned himself a Christian. Mr. Lucas had a competent share of understanding, but he was of so flexible a disposition, that he was easily persuaded by every man of whom he had a good opinion. I made use of my influence with him, to confirm him in a reasonable and well-grounded faith, and a suitable practice.

He publicly declared his obligations to me; said that I had placed him once more upon firm ground, and that he would regulate his future conduct by the true system of Christianity. I gained much credit by his conversion. He wrote to his mother and told her his obligations to me. In consequence, I received a most polite invitation to accompany him into Staffordshire; my friend urged
me

me to accept it : and, with my father's permission, I attended him to his family seat, where I met with a joyful welcome from the family, which consisted of Mr. Lucas's mother, a respectable lady ; Mrs. Horton, her sister ; a woman-grown daughter of each of these ladies ; and another young woman, a relation and dependant upon the family.

Mr. Lucas had been early spoiled, by the fond indulgence of his mother to her only son ; he had been allowed to spend too much money, and had anticipated his income ever since he had been of age ; his guardian was apprehensive that he would spend his whole fortune. But he now professed a reformation of every kind, and attributed all to my friendship. Mr. Withers, his late guardian, a worthy old gentleman, shewed me every flattering mark of his esteem, and every individual of the family gave me the most cordial welcome.

Mrs. Lucas offered me presents of value, which I refused ; and said, that her son's friendship was my best recompence. The young ladies were both handsome and amia-

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ble; Miss Lucas was generally thought the finest woman; her aspect had in it both grace and dignity; not without a degree of pride, both of birth and fortune, which gave her an air of conscious superiority over both her cousins. Miss Horton was much lower in stature; of a clear and healthy complexion, with intelligent hazel eyes and dark brown hair. Whenever she spoke or smiled, she had a thousand inexpressible graces about her mouth; her person seemed to receive new animation, and every word she spoke found its way directly to the heart. To mine, it spoke a language new and expressive; and made an impression there, which neither time nor absence could ever erase. I was young and diffident; I dared not declare my passion, but preserved a distance and reserve becoming my situation and late acquaintance. There was however a secret intercourse between us, though we seemed mutually afraid of each other. This respectable family was visited by all the genteel ones in that neighbourhood; we were invited to several balls and entertainments, and every mark of polite attention was shewn to Mr. Lucas and his friends: he presented me to all his neighbours;

bours as the chosen friend of his heart, and one to whom he owed great obligations. Our visit passed agreeably, upon the whole ; but I had two causes of pain at my departure ; one, a too apparent attention of Miss Lucas to myself ; the other was, the uncertainty of my situation with respect to Miss Horton. In the midst of these difficulties, we were obliged to hasten back to Oxford, and leave these events in the bosom of futurity.

Soon after our return I received a letter from Mr. Withers, with a proposal for me to accompany Mr. Lucas in his intended tour through France and Italy. I begged leave to decline this offer, saying, I was contented to travel by the book, and that I wished to enter upon the duties of my profession at home ; that my father was advanced in years, and declining in his health ; that he ardently wished for my company, and I was certain he would be unhappy if I should leave him.

This answer was not satisfactory. Soon after, I received a letter from Mrs. Lucas, requesting me, for her son's sake, to give him my company ; that she could rely upon me for the care of her son's health and principles,

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ples, and that she feared to trust him with a stranger, for many reasons. That there were two good livings in the family, and that I might depend upon one, or both of them; and I might reckon upon the friendship, interest, and services of every part of the family. She invited me to repeat my visit, and to settle the terms of our agreement, as soon as we could be spared from college duties.

I sent this and the former letter to my dear father, and desired him to answer this proposal for me in whatever manner he pleased. My father declared against it in the strongest manner. He answered Mrs. Lucas's letter, declining the proposal; at the same time acknowledging her kindness and generosity towards me, and begging the continuance of her friendship and esteem for me. But to me he gave much stronger reasons for his refusal.

"I have seldom known a young man make this Tour, said he, but he returned the worse for it, either in principles or practice, but most commonly in both." Even Dryden, who was not a man of the best morals or principles, speaks against it:

What

"What learn our youth abroad, but to refine
 "The homely vices of their native land;
 "Give me an honest homespun country man
 "Of our own growth—his dulness is but plain,
 "But theirs embroider'd—they are sent out fools,
 "And come back fops." Spanish Friar.

"But of all things, what most offends my
 "sight, is a travelled coxcomb Parson. I
 "pray to heaven that I may never see
 "my son one of these: it would bring
 "down my grey hairs with sorrow to the
 "grave."

After this admonition from my father, I persevered in my refusal. Soon after, I was honoured with a letter from Miss Lucas, acquainting me that her mother was not well enough to write herself, but that she requested me, by *her hand*, to look out for her, and to recommend a proper person to be her son's companion; for that he would not permit any person to assume the title of his governor. She begged me to visit the family as often as my leisure and inclination would allow, and assured me that I should always find myself a most welcome guest to all the family, and to *none more* than to *herself*.

I ac-

I acquitted myself of this commission. I recommended a worthy young man of the name of Bates, who gladly accepted the offer. He accompanied Mr. Lucas and myself on a visit to his mother, where the terms were settled, and every thing agreed. While we were there, Mrs. Lucas, who had long been in a declining state, died rather suddenly in appearance, though the cause had been of long standing. Her son and daughter were deeply affected by her death; but it made no alteration in his resolution to travel, it rather hastened his departure. He desired his sister, aunt, and cousins, to continue at the Hall, and to keep up the same household and expence till his return; he behaved very properly as a master and a landlord, and gave hopes of his being a respectable man in his station, which is an important one in respect to society.

During my second visit here, I explained myself to Miss Horton, and solicited her favour. She received my address with modest confidence; she confessed it gave her pleasure, but she foresaw a great obstacle in the way of our mutual happiness.—Miss Lucas
loves

loves you, Sir, said she; she has a good fortune, she has many fine qualities; I should be sorry to be a hindrance to your making your fortune; though, I confess, I wish I was the person to do it, for I had rather confer than receive an obligation.—I assured her of my love, and of my honour; that if she would share my lot, which was likely to be an humble one, I would refuse the highest rank or fortune for her sake. We agreed to keep our engagement secret, till such time as I should be in a situation to marry; and to conceal our mutual affection from the eye of observation. Miss Lucas behaved with the utmost attention and politeness to me; but her concern for her mother's recent death gave an air of solemnity to her whole deportment. I staid only till Mr. Lucas made the necessary preparations for his departure, which made our adieus very affecting on all sides. I accompanied him and his companion to Harwich, from whence he proposed going through Holland and Flanders before he should make the tour of France.

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At parting he embraced me with tears in his eyes. I shall never forget the obligations I owe you, my dear Bennet; I shall fulfill my mother's request, and my own inclination, in giving you the first living that is vacant; I promise it to you, and you may rely upon my word.

I made my grateful acknowledgments in suitable terms; I recommended Mr. Bates and him to each other's care, and returned with a heavy heart to Oxford, where I obtained a fellowship, took a master of arts degree, and was admitted to priests' orders before I went to visit my father.

During my stay with him, I received a letter from the gentleman who had been guardian to Mr. Lucas, which contained a formal proposal of Miss Lucas's hand and fortune, which he was authorized to make me: he said, she had made so worthy a choice, that he could not make one objection to it; that a *man* without a fortune, was preferable to a *coxcomb* with a large one; that it was the strongest proof of the lady's good sense, discernment, and generosity; moreover he was certain, that her brother would

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would approve it, and that it would establish the happiness of a worthy and respectable family; he acquainted me that the lady's fortune was full ten thousand pounds.

My confusion was so great upon reading this letter, that my father desired to know the cause of it. I then opened my heart to him, and told him of my engagement to Miss Horton; assuring him, that I would prefer her with only *one thousand* pounds, to any other with the wealth of India for her dowry.—There is no room for a moment's doubt, said my father; even if your heart were not so deeply attached, an engagement of this kind is sacred; a man, who for interested motives presumes to break it, deserves the hatred and contempt of all mankind, and nourishes a scorpion in his heart, that will poison his happiness for the remainder of his life.

I am entirely of your opinion, Sir, said I; I will write that I am engaged already, and cannot accept the proposal.—Then you will act like an honest man, said he, and you may expect the blessing of heaven upon your engagement.—I wrote accordingly, that I

was extremely sensible of the honour done me by Miss Lucas, whose person, fortune, and qualities, deserved a man every way my superior; but that my heart and my promise were already engaged, and that I had not the shadow of a wish to be released from my vows.—I wrote also to Miss Horton, acquainted her with the proposal I had received, gave her a transcript of my answer to it, and referred myself entirely to her pleasure in respect to the declaring of our engagements; which I had not a wish to conceal, but that I waited her commands upon this occasion, and would be directed by her in this and all other respects. I begged that she would write soon, and let me know how my answer to the proposal was received, and what step I was next to take; that I should impatiently expect her answer, upon which my fate depended. I waited with impatience, and not without uneasiness, for an answer to my letter; a thousand disagreeable apprehensions disturbed my mind: at length the expected letter came, and opened a new scene of action to me, which decided the principal events of my life. I transcribe it in this place.

“Dear

“ Dear Sir,

YOUR letters have produced strange effects ; it was some time before I could compose my mind enough to give you an account of them.

Our engagement is, indeed, *declared* ; but not in the manner either of us wished. I must go back to the time when my cousin was expecting your answer to her proposal.

She threw out hints to my mother and me, that she had a treaty of marriage under consideration, and that she was certain both of us would approve her choice.

I kept silence, but I could say with David, that it was “ pain and grief to me ;” for I had no doubt of the *person*, but I had my doubts with respect to *his answer*.

Forgive me, Sir ; I am convinced they were injurious to you ; but a woman and a lover, fears every thing.

At length Mr. Withers came, and brought your answer ; which produced a great alteration in Miss Lucas, who grew silent, reserved, and unhappy. She shunned our company, except at meals, and then withdrew soon after. Your letter to me arrived
a few

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a few days after, and I then understood perfectly the cause of her uneasiness.

I felt for her, for you, and for myself; I was frequently inclined to confess my situation to her, and to offer my interest with you; for I could not bear to see her miserable, and to know myself the cause of it.

My mother begged her to communicate the cause of her concern to her; but she desired her to excuse her. She looked at me as if expecting me to speak to her. I looked down, blushed, and kept a profound silence. Whether my behaviour raised her suspicions, I don't know; but one day, while I was walking in the garden, she went into my room, looked into my drawers, and found there several of your letters, but above all your last to me. This discovery roused her from her silent melancholy, and I believe was of real service to her, for it enabled her to give vent to the passion that preyed upon her heart: but it raised a storm that hath destroyed the peace of this family for ever. She came down stairs, rang the bell violently, and ordered the servant to call me: "Bid Miss Horton come to me." The
servant

servant told me, he was sure something more than ordinary was the matter, for her mistress looked as if she was not in her right mind. I was frightened, and bid her call my mother to us directly. When I went into the parlour, her passion exceeded all description; she raved in accents hardly articulate. She called me traitor! deceiver! every thing that was bad. I guessed the matter presently; I pitied her, and endeavoured to keep my temper and my resolution. I gave way in silence, and let her run herself out of breath.

When my mother came in, she found us in this situation; she was astonished past expression, and could only say, What is the matter?—Here, Madam! see here what a daughter you have! what a friend I! what a serpent I have fostered in my bosom, and now it stings me to death!—So saying, she gave my mother your letter, and then sunk back into her chair, breathless and fainting. I rang for drops and water, but sent the maid out of the room.

I besought my mother not to judge of me hardly, that I could not accuse myself of
any

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any thing wrong, except concealing your addresses *from her*; as for the rest, I had not deceived or betrayed any one. That I had reason to complain of my cousin, for looking into my papers; but that she had been punished severely for it, and I forgave and pitied her.—*Pity me!* said she; am I fallen so low as to excite your pity? No, I hate, detest, and despise you! Go from my house, I will harbour you no longer!

My dear cousin, moderate your passion, and hear me; suffer me to tell my story, and to justify myself.

I will hear *nothing*; I know enough: you have *robbed me*!—Robbed you, Madam! What mean you? Do not expose yourself and us too.—Yes, robbed me of the only thing I valued upon earth: have you not stolen *Bennet's* heart from me?—No, Madam, he made a voluntary gift of it to me, before you had any *pretensions* to it.—Don't talk to me: get out of my sight! I shall go distracted if you remain here!—My mother said, Maria, leave us; go to your own chamber, and I will come to you soon.

I left

I left them together, and went up to my chamber, where I spent a wretched hour, accusing myself as if I had committed the greatest crime. At length my mother came to me; I threw myself at her feet, and begged her to hear me.

I told her the whole of our connexion, from the very first hour that you honoured me with your notice. She heard me patiently and kindly; she raised and embraced me.

My dear child, be comforted, repose your sorrows in the bosom of your parent; this is an indiscreet connexion according to the world's judgment; but, if Mr. Bennet prefers poverty with you, to affluence with another, what right have I to refuse my consent? the heart will choose for itself; and if the attachment be founded upon virtue, it must be a crime to oppose it. I must leave it to you to choose your own lot; it is you that must abide by it.

I gave my dear mother a thousand thanks and blessings for her goodness; I told her the concern I was under for my cousin, and my wishes for her peace and happiness.—I wish it as ardently and sincerely as you do; but, my

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L

dear,

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dear, we must leave this house directly; perhaps when this affair is blown over, she may wish to see me again; but you, I am afraid, she never will. I hope when we are gone, she will recover her reason, and her peace; my cousin, Mary Mills, will remain with her; I shall recommend it to her to take proper care of her, and to give her whole attention to her; I will likewise take a proper leave of her, and if she will permit it, you shall do the same.—My mother's kindness calmed my ruffled spirits; she went from one to the other all the day; she tried to promote a reconciliation, but my cousin would hear no reason. The next day my mother went to Mr. Styles's, a tenant of the family; she asked him to take us to lodge and board for some time, saying, There was an unhappy difference among us which time would heal. She sent for Mr. Withers, and told him the whole story, desiring him to assist, advise, and comfort my cousin Lucas.

At my mother's return, we prepared for our departure: I begged to take leave of my cousin, but she refused to see me.—Tell her, said she, that she has carried all her *points*; but I
will

will write to my *brother*, and let him know what a *grateful friend* and *generous cousin* he has ; and I will *punish her* where she will *feel it most*.

I find it high time to conclude this letter. Direct to me as you will see in the cover ; write to me soon ; restore my peace and tranquillity ; and dispose of me as you please.

MARIA HORTON."

I READ this letter with great emotion, and then gave it to my father, and asked his advice how to proceed.—There is but one way, said he ; you can no longer conceal or disavow your engagement. Write to Mrs. Horton immediately ; offer this house as an asylum to her and her daughter.—You are the best of fathers, said I ; and I can never express my sense of your kindness to me !—Show it by your actions, my son, and that will be better. Hearken : I have been long a widower ; your mother died early of a consumption, that was the bane of her family ; your sister married last year, and left me alone. A

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house without a woman at the head of it, is a dreary uncomfortable place; you shall give me a daughter that shall be the comfort of my old age.—I flew to my father, I embraced and thanked him, more indeed by actions than words, for my joy rose almost to rapture.—He observed me.—Harkee, young man! let me lower you a little: how are you to maintain a wife!—Dear Sir, said I, she brings me a little fortune of her own; I shall get a double curacy; and your goodness will piece out a scanty income, till such time as I can get some preferment.—And when is that to be? said my father, smiling.

Sir, I have a promise from Mr. Lucas.—My father shook his head.—Do you recollect Miss Lucas's threatening? she will hinder her brother's good intentions towards you.

I hope not, Sir; if he renounces his promise without hearing reason, he is unworthy the name of friend.

That will be a great consolation to you, William; but I will not throw more cold water than is necessary to make you think soberly of what you are about. You *shall* marry the lady, and you shall be my curate,
till

till you can do better. You shall be all my boarders, and you must pray for my life, that you may still have a house over your head. Go, write your letters, and pursue the plan I have chalked out.—I wrote to Miss Horton in the terms of an accepted lover; and prevailed on my father to write himself to Mrs. Horton, as the invitation would come more properly from him. I told them I should only wait for their answer, and set out immediately to fetch them to my father's house.

We received answers as soon as they could possibly reach us, in which both the ladies acknowledged gratefully my father's kindness and hospitality, and in consequence his affection to his son. Mrs. Horton thought it was better for us to wait some time, till Miss Lucas's resentment should be abated, before we married. She said, she had noble qualities, as well as strong passions; and made no doubt she would return to a right way of thinking; in that case she would be our friend; in the other, we should confirm her our enemy.

I was of a different opinion; that when once our marriage was celebrated, and there was

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no remedy, Miss Lucas would return to a right way of thinking; that her aim was to suspend our happiness, and while she could do that, she would be upon no terms with us. My father gave his judgment on my side the question. I wrote to Mrs. Horton, and told her she might expect to see me soon after the letter, for I would be kept at that distance no longer.

Accordingly I went over the week following, and was received as I wished to be both by mother and daughter; they told me they sent every day since they left the hall, to enquire after Miss Lucas's health: the answer was, Very well, but she saw no company. It was debated whether I should send in my own name, and whether I should not wait on her. Mrs. Horton gave it as her opinion, that it would only irritate her resentment, and that I should not visit her. She sent a haughty message to Mr. Styles, the farmer, to know how long his lodgers were to stay with him. This decided my business; and they consented to go with me to my father's house.

Mrs.

Mrs Horton wrote a conciliatory letter to Miss Lucas, saying, That finding her residence in that neighbourhood was disagreeable to her, she had accepted of an asylum offered by a friend. She made no complaints of her injustice, uttered no reproaches, but left it to time, and her own good sense, to bring about what at present seemed improbable; and should always remain her faithful friend. I thought proper to write to her myself, tho' against the advice and opinion of the ladies. My letter was as follows :

“ MADAM,

THE respect I bear Miss Lucas, both for her own and her brother's sake, obliges me to pay her my compliments during my stay in her neighbourhood. I am extremely concerned that my engagement to Miss Horton should have been the cause of a misunderstanding between such near and worthy relations. I honour Miss Lucas for her fine qualities, and think I cannot be deceived in my opinion of her. I believe that time and reflexion will restore her to those friends, whom misapprehension has driven to banishment.

L 4

I could

I could not be so near, and not let it be known to you, as I am not conscious of any action that requires to be concealed or disguised.—I shall at all times be proud to obey your commands in any thing in which you will accept my services ; and shall ever preserve a grateful remembrance of the friendship with which I once was honoured.

I am, Madam,

Your most obliged and obedient Servant,

WILLIAM BENNET."

I STAID three days after these letters were sent to the hall ; and finding there was no answer to be expected, my ladies and I set out upon our journey, and arrived safely at my native village, and my well-known happy home.

My dear father received us with so much cordiality, as won the hearts of his two amiable guests. Mrs. Horton's politeness, and my dear Maria's attentions, had the same effect on him. Every one strove to oblige the rest, and the contest was an additional motive to promote the family happiness.

My

My father urged Mrs. Horton to complete his son's happiness; he offered to settle whatever fortune her daughter brought, upon her and her children; and hoped she would not think of any other home for herself.—I thank you, Sir, said she, but I shall not think myself at home here, unless you allow me to pay for my board.—That shall be just as you please, Madam, he replied; as for our children, I shall give them their board, and they shall repay me by their company and good offices. They must now lay by all they can against the time, when they must keep house for themselves.—I shall certainly favour that scheme, said Mrs. Horton, and I shall be willing that Maria's fortune, or a part of it, should go to purchase a living for your son.—That is very generous on your part, Madam; but I have objections to that; and I do not despair of William's obtaining some preferment, without breaking in upon that. I shall make all the interest I can, that he may succeed me here; he was born in this house, he is known and beloved by all the parish; I shall try what can be done; if this does not succeed, let us wait with patience.—

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I will always, answered the lady, be ready to promote every scheme for their advantage; I am confident they will be good and contented in every situation. I firmly believe and trust that they will; and show the world, that happiness does not depend upon riches; then we shall be the happiest family in the county.

After a generous contest which shewed the high opinion each party had of the other, it was agreed that Miss Horton's fortune should be vested in trustees hands, and settled on her and her children. She and I left every thing of this kind to our parents. An honest attorney made the writings; and as soon as they were finished and executed, my father married me to my dear Maria, and made me the happiest of men. There never was a family wherein a more intire harmony subsisted; our happiness, far from abating, seemed every day to increase, as my wife disclosed those amiable and useful qualities which could only be known by those who lived with her. To a mind enlightened by reading and observation, she added all the domestic qualities. An admirable manager and œconomist; she knew

knew to keep the happy medium between profusion and parsimony; generous by nature, frugal by necessity, she spared from herself to relieve the wants of others. She visited the poorest person in the parish; she gave medicines of her own preparing to the sick; she gave food to the needy; advice to the litigious. Her charities were comprized within so small an expence, that it was admirable to consider. She never spent a penny idly, nor bought any thing superfluous to adorn her person; yet there was such neatness and elegance in her dress and manner, that any body would have given her credit for three times the money she expended.

To my father and her own mother, the most dutiful and tender of children; to me, a most amiable wife. I doated upon her, and yet thought I could not love her enough.

Such was—Oh rather let me bless heaven that I can say, *such is* the woman who honoured me with her hand! *such is* the mother I gave to my children; *such are* the qualities a man should seek for, in the woman he chooses for his companion through life.

L. 6

“Favour

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“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain;
 “(says the royal preacher); but a woman
 “that feareth the Lord shall be praised.

“A virtuous woman is a crown to her
 “husband; but she that maketh ashamed, is
 “as rottenness in his bones.

“A virtuous woman retaineth honour, as
 “strong men retain riches.

“Her children rise up, and call her blessed;
 “her husband also, and he praiseth her.

“Give her of the fruits of her hands,
 “and let her own works praise her in the
 “gates.”

I will check my pen which knows not how
 to stop on this subject, and only utter the
 final wish of my soul, which is (if God so
 please) that I may not survive this excellent
 woman.—I proceed with my history.

About three months after my marriage, I
 received a letter from Mr. Lucas, in which
 he remembered his former friendship. He
 said, he had a strange letter from his sister, in
 which she complained, that I had behaved un-
 handsomely to her, and made a difference be-
 tween her and her relations; desiring him not
 to give me the living he had promised, but
 keep

keep it for one more worthy of it. He said, she had told him no particulars, and therefore he desired to hear them from me. He hoped the offence was not such as would oblige him to renounce my friendship; desired me to write to him at Montpellier, where he was at that time, and should stay some months on account of his health, which was not good enough to proceed to Italy.

I wrote an answer immediately, in which I guarded the lady's honour as carefully as my own. I told him, that I had presumed to solicit Miss Horton's hand, without consulting Miss Lucas; that she resented my behaviour, and had set her face against me from that time; that I was actually married to his fair cousin, and the happiest of men in being her husband; that I relied upon his friendship to reconcile us both to his sister, for whom I had every sentiment of esteem and respect; and hoped his return would reunite us all.

I received an answer to this letter as soon as I could expect; and also one from Mr. Bates, expressing his apprehensions for Mr. Lucas's life, and fearing a consumption.—

“He

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“ He said, Mr. Lucas cannot understand,
 “ *why* his sister should be offended with you
 “ for addressing Miss Horton. *I think I can;*
 “ but I do not tell him my conjecture. I tell
 “ him that your honour and principles render
 “ it impossible that you should affront a lady,
 “ and the sister of your friend; but it is
 “ owing to some misapprehension, and I am
 “ certain will blow over very soon.”

Mr. Lucas expressed himself to the same effect, and I began ardently to wish for his return. I wrote to urge him to come back, if his health was not soon re-established. I gave him some serious advice, and assured him of my warm affection towards him.

Mr. Bates answered this letter on his behalf; said, that he was in a place recommended for his disorder; that he would not go to Italy, unless he were quite restored; that his conduct had been prudent and regular in all respects; that he had frequently serious conferences with him; that he repented sincerely the follies and errors of his youth; often spoke of his obligations to me; was constant in his private duties, and seemed as if preparing for another world, but yet was under no dejection of mind.

I wrote

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I wrote again to Mr. Bates, desiring him by all means to let Miss Lucas know the situation of her brother: and wished him to come home directly, if he was able to bear the journey. Afterwards I consulted my wife and mother, whether it would not be better to give Miss Lucas immediate notice of her brother's danger; it was thought proper to do so, but not under either of our hands.

My father used the pen, and wrote as follows:

"A warm and sincere friend to Miss Lucas, thinks it is his duty to advertise her, that her brother is in a very bad state of health at Montpelier; that his malady is of the consumptive kind, and it is apprehended he is in some danger. He leaves it to Miss Lucas to make what use she thinks best of this information; but in case a dreaded event had happened, before she was prepared, he could not have forgiven himself.

PHILOCLEES."

We found ourselves more easy and satisfied after we had given this information; we enquired what use was made of it; and heard that Miss Lucas was set out for the continent.

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continent presently after receiving our letter.—Oh, said I, that she had not banished her friends! I would cheerfully have attended her to Montpelier, and have paid the duties of friendship to both sister and brother.

At the conclusion of the year my dear Maria made me a father; she brought me a son, whose birth added to the family happiness, though his life was of short duration; he died at eleven months old.

Soon after the arrival of Miss Lucas at Montpelier, Mr. Bates wrote me word of this event; he supposed from whom she received the intelligence of her brother's illness; he rejoiced that she was present, to see that all kind of attention and care was paid to her brother, of whose recovery there were but little hopes.

“I wish, said he, that I stood as well with Miss Lucas as you once did. And yet, to speak the whole truth, I *rather wish* that you had taken Miss Lucas yourself, and left Miss Horton to me; but that could not be; you are happy, and I will endeavour to be contented.”

I wrote to Mr. Bates, and received his answers constantly, with an account of the progress

progress of Mr. Lucas's distemper, and at last of his death. He died like a *man*, and like a *Christian*, bequeathed his whole fortune to his sister, but reminded her of his obligations to Mr. Bates and *me*. He desired her to send rings to all his relations and friends, and to give an handsome sum to the poor of his native parish.

Miss Lucas determined to bring his body home, to be interred with his ancestors. Mr. Bates attended it; he gave me notice of his arrival. I went uninvited, and attended the funeral of my friend. I set out the minute after, travelled all night, and came hastily home.

We paid the tears of friendship to his ashes, and wished he had been granted a longer continuance among us.

It was full two months after the funeral, that one day, as I was in my study, my wife came to me with marks of surprize in her countenance.

—My dear William, said she, prepare for a surprize—Of what kind, my love, said I?—Said she, There is a chaise and six horses now entered our yard; a mourning one, with two servants in mourning; it can be but one person in the world.—Let us go, said I; let us hasten to meet her!

I am

I am in a fit of trembling, said she.—Then stay, said I.—No, said she; I must go with you.—I took her hand, and led her out. The servant came to meet us, to tell us that a lady was come into the parlour. I hastened thither; Maria hung upon my arm. I felt somewhat confused! As soon as we entered the room, Miss Lucas ran into her cousin's arms, the tears flowed fast down her cheeks. Forgive me, Maria! my dear cousin, forgive me! said she.—Maria could not speak; she embraced her cousin, she wept, but could not presently answer her.

Miss Lucas repeated, Can you forgive me? —Forgive you! oh my cousin, my friend! I have never ceased to love you!—Then you are an angel! but you always were my superior in every thing. I was jealous of your superiority; I could not bear others should see it. I was mean, ungenerous, base; but I have suffered for it as I deserved. I have never been happy since our separation; and I come now to seek your forgiveness, that I may be at peace with myself.—Don't say so! my dear cousin! said Maria. I knew your heart could not resent always; I knew

it would return to mine ; I knew you better than you did yourself.—You are too good, said Miss Lucas ; but I have more pardons to ask,—turning to me.

Not one word in that style, my dear Madam ! We are your friends and your servants, if you will accept us.

Yes, *one word*, Sir ; Was it not you that advised me of my brother's situation ?—It was, Madam.—I knew it could be nobody else. Oh, Sir, you have lost a friend !—She wept.—But I will restore another to you. The solemn scenes I have been witness to, have made me look into my own heart. I have seen my faults, thank God ! and I live in hopes to amend them.—I begged her to say nothing that could occasion disagreeable recollections ; she became more composed. She asked for her aunt ; who had been preparing to see her without emotion.

When she came to us, Miss Lucas ran and embraced her. Are you not surprised, Madam, to see one here ?—Not at all, my dear, I expected it ; I was sure you would act thus.

You are kind, indeed, said she, to try to reconcile me to myself ; but you were always better

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better to me than I deserved.—After our first emotions were abated, she presented each of us with a ring with her brother's hair, set round with brilliants ;—" By my brother's order," said she.

She said every thing generous and kind, and seemed to enjoy this reconciliation as the first wish of her heart.

My father was surprized to see so fine a lady, and to hear her generous confession of her past faults : she said, it was the first happy hour she had enjoyed, from the day her aunt and cousin left her house.

After dinner, when the servants were withdrawn, she said, I have but one thing more to say, and then my mind will be eased of its burthen. My brother desired that I would give the two livings, as they should fall, to you and Mr. Bates ; the option shall be yours, Sir.—I offered to speak.—I will receive no thanks, said she ; I only fulfill the desire of your friend, who blessed you with his last breath.

After this she seemed to recover her spirits. She spent a week with us, and behaved with the greatest kindness and politeness to us all.

She

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She made noble presents to our child, who was then living; and departed home with the blessings of our whole family: she desired we would visit her as often as our convenience would permit, and made her aunt promise to come to her soon.

Soon after Miss Lucas returned home, she was very pressing to her aunt to come over to her: Our dear mother was unwilling to leave us; she delayed her departure till the summer. Miss Lucas continued urging her by letter, and gave such reasons as made it impossible to refuse her.

“ I am besieged, my dear aunt, said she; the fortune I inherit is the occasion of much trouble to me: I am as much tormented with suitors as Penelope was of old; I send one away, and another comes immediately. They are *importunate, troublesome, rude*; I am obliged to be unpolite to them: my cousin Mary is not of consequence enough to strengthen my hands; I want my dear aunt to enable me to keep these men at their proper distance. Mr. Withers is against me; he says it is my duty to marry, and encourages

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rages new suitors as fast as I send away the old ones.

“If my dear aunt will not come to me, I will shut up my house, go to a distant part, change my name, and conceal my fortune, that I may enjoy my own comforts, and live after my own manner.”

Mrs. Horton wrote in answer, “That she was preparing to wait upon her;” and in a week after she went, and deprived her children of her company for many months; yet they could not oppose her departure.

Mrs. Horton and Miss Lucas wrote in turn to my wife, and informed us of every thing that passed with them: our cousin thought herself under great obligations to us for sparing our mother to her; she sent us many presents, and declared she should not be happy till an opportunity offered that would enable her to serve us effectually.

The year following brought forward a new series of events, that ended in the accomplishment of all our wishes. The first step towards it was, that one of the livings in Miss Lucas’s gift became vacant. Mrs. Horton wrote to me upon the occasion by Miss Lucas’s

Lucas's desire, telling me that the living was mine, if I chose to accept it; but that she thought it right to tell me of some *disagreeable* circumstances attending it.

It was in an unpleasant situation, a lonely village, far removed from all our friends, two days journey from their mansion, and at an immense distance from my father.

The other living, was Miss Lucas's own parish, which she supposed would be more desirable to myself and my wife: if I chose to wait for that, I *might depend* upon it; that if I declined the *present* living, she should give it to Mr. Bates. Miss Lucas desired that Mrs. Horton would write all these particulars, lest I should be under any difficulty in declining the offer when made by *herself*.

I answered her letter to this effect: "That I was under the same obligation to Miss Lucas, whether I accepted or declined it; that my father could not bear the thoughts of parting with his children; he thought himself in a declining state, and a separation would be almost death to him; that I should refuse any preferment, however advantageous, that could interfere with the duty and affection

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affection I owed to my dear father; and that all other considerations vanished before it.

Secondly, that I had a predilection in favour of the dear village where I was born, and wherein I had spent so many happy years: that my father intended to use his interest with the patron, for the next turn of the living of S—— for me; or, if the patron consented, he would resign the living directly, if he would give it to his son; that I was so well acquainted with Miss Lucas's generous heart, that I had no scruple to open mine to her, and to declare its wishes; that if my father's application should not succeed, I would wait in expectation of her goodness, in regard to the other living; but that, whatever the event might be, she had bound me and mine to her, in an eternal bond of gratitude and obligation."

This letter Mrs. Horton gave to her cousin; she smiled on reading it. Tell your son, said she, that he is a *proud man*, and chooses to be obliged to any body rather than to me; but tell him also, that I will yet be *revenged on him*. Bid him apply to the patron of the living of S——, and let me know the result as soon as possible.

She

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She said this in a manner that shewed her real intention to serve me. Mrs. Horton told me in her letter, that she was certain her cousin would provide for me one way or other.

My father applied directly to the patron of the living of S——; he was a worldly-minded man, who thought of nothing but to make the most of every thing. He took some weeks to consider of the proposal, and then wrote to my father, “That though his father had given away the living to him, as a proof of his friendship, there was no reason why he should do it to his son; that times were altered, expences increased, and that he could not afford to *give away* things of so much value; but, if my father would give him five hundred pounds for the next turn of the living, he might then resign it, and he would present it to his son; but otherwise it should remain as it was.”

We were under some difficulty to relate this treaty to Miss Lucas: we foresaw that her generosity would lead her to purchase it for us, and we thought it was calling upon her to do it: on the other hand, she would certainly be offended, if we made any conceal-

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ments or disguises to her. I wrote to Mrs. Horton, told her of this treaty, and that my father had an objection to the proposal of purchasing the next turn of the living for me; that I had given it up, and had turned my wishes and expectations another way.

My father received a letter from Miss Lucas immediately on the receipt of mine, desiring him to proceed *no farther* in this business; that she insisted on taking a new treaty upon herself, and should be offended in the highest degree if he interfered in it. "Wait till you hear from me, said she, and prepare to resign the living; I will have your son owe this obligation *to me*, to *mortify* him for all his past behaviour to me."

Generous, noble-minded woman! said my father; she will have her *revenge*, and she shall take her own way.

A few weeks after, my father received another letter from our patroness.

"The business is done, Sir; you will resign your living, and I shall present your son to it; I have purchased the advowson, and will be *patroness myself*. Tell your son I shall pay him a visit shortly, and bring his mother with me,

me, upon condition that her daughter will not detain her, but let her return with me."

She came soon after; every thing was settled between my father and me, to our mutual satisfaction; there never was seen a group of happier people upon one spot. Miss Lucas enjoyed our satisfaction, but yet there seemed a cloud upon her brow at times; she ruminated frequently, and seemed to have something upon her mind that she wished to communicate. One day after dinner she spoke to us:—"I want to make known my present situation to you all, my dear friends; but for my life I cannot tell the story myself. I will give my aunt Horton leave to do it, but it must be when I am not present. I will retire to my chamber, and leave her to tell you all that I wish you to know."—So saying, she retired; and our curiosity being strongly excited, we begged my dear mother to gratify it, which she did by relating what follows.

"I need not tell you, my dearest children, that Miss Lucas has had many offers of marriage since her brother died; she has refused them, upon a presumption that her fortune

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was their principal object ; though, as you know, her person and fine qualities might well engage and secure a lover on better motives. Her modest opinion of her own attractions, and her fear of becoming a victim to a fordid and interested mind, kept her from accepting any offer that could be made, though some were from men of fortune equal with her own. I need not tell you that she has a noble, frank, and generous heart ; she has always said, “ I would rather *confer* than *receive* an obligation ; I had rather engage a man’s *gratitude*, than that he should demand mine.”

After this preface I must inform you, that about three months ago a young gentleman, whose name is Valentine Lucas, paid a visit to our friend Mr. Withers. He told him that he had been informed, that a part of the family estate was *entailed* upon the *male heir* ; that he was the person that had the right to claim it ; that out of respect to Miss Lucas’s character, he was desirous to spare her every thing that could possibly give her uneasiness ; that he would submit his claim to the arbitration of some of the most eminent men of
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the law, if Miss Lucas would do the same; and begged the favour of him to inform Miss Lucas of his claim in what manner he thought was the most respectful on his part, and the least likely to give her offence.

Mr. Withers was extremely pleased with the young man's person and address; he enquired into his character and fortune. He heard that he was of a small fortune, not more than three hundred a year; was bred to the law, just called to the bar, of good character and abilities, and of great expectations in his profession. He made his report to Miss Lucas, who was at first a good deal surprized and disconcerted; but upon hearing of the young man's fair and open behaviour, she was in better spirits, and seemed willing to refer this business to arbitration. Mr. Withers urged her to see the gentleman, and to hear what he would say upon the subject. He brought him to pay his respects; the lady was pleased with his person and behaviour, which was exceedingly modest and respectful. Mr. Withers observed them both, and, at his return, had a long conversation with Mr. Lucas; in the course of which, he

asked him whether he should not like a compromise at the lady's expence? The young gentleman urged him to explain his meaning.

Why, said Mr. Withers, if I were a young man in *your* situation, I would try my *fortune* with the lady, cheat the lawyers, and share the estate with *her* only.

Dear Sir, said Mr. Lucas, you surprize me! with my little fortune, how can I presume? If, indeed, it were equal to her's, it would be the first wish of my heart; but in my situation it would appear interested and presumptuous.

If your fortune equalled *her's*, would you *address her*?—Sir, I would, by heaven! said he.—Very well. Will you give me leave to tell her so?—If, Sir,—if you think she will not be offended. I would not for the world that she should think me wanting in respect to her.—These sentiments are the most likely to make you esteemed by her, Sir. I know Miss Lucas has a generous, noble heart, and I wish her to marry; I think she could not make a more proper choice.—Dear Sir, you transport me by your goodness! If you will, indeed, be my friend, I will put
my

my cause into your hands.—I will take it upon me, Sir ; you shall be my *client*, and I will be your *solicitor* ; be of good courage, and hope for success.

The next day Mr. Withers came and told the whole story to Miss Lucas. She was offended with him ; but the good old man urged her with so much eloquence and reason on his side, that he served his client effectually, and at length she consented to receive his visits, and to hear him speak for himself.

I seconded Mr. Withers in his remonstrances, telling her that she ought to marry, having not one good reason to the contrary ; and that, in case the gentleman proved worthy of her affection, he was the very man she had wished to find ; her equal in birth and merit ; and, in fortune, one upon whom she could confer an *obligation*, and entitle herself to his gratitude and respect.

The gentleman came to visit her ; and the oftener he came, the more merit we discovered in him : in short, he is very likely to succeed in his suit to her ; and she will, I make no doubt, confirm her own happiness

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when she compleats his. She was resolved to provide for my dear children before she gives up her power over her own fortune. Mr. Lucas is acquainted with the motive of her journey; he adores her for it, and would fain have attended us hither, but she would not permit him: she has wanted to tell you this story, but had not the courage; but now you have heard it, you will, I dare say, rather strengthen than weaken her resolution to marry."

We were overjoyed to hear of her intention, and, at her return to the company, we congratulated her on her resolution, and told her we were grieved that she would not suffer us to pay our respects to the happy man of her choice.

She received our compliments with kindness and affection; and hoped we would visit her in Staffordshire.

She asked our permission to keep my mother with her till her marriage was over.—I believe, said she, I shall keep my aunt till you come to fetch her home.

After a fortnight's stay, she returned home, and carried our mother with her, whom we
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cheerfully spared, in hope she would soon take up her residence with us entirely.

About a month after her return home, Miss Lucas made her lover happy. Mr. Withers was the nuptial father, and seemed as much delighted as if he had married his own daughter, for he was interested in every thing that concerned the honour and happiness of Miss Lucas.—Now, said he, I shall hope to see the Lucas family revive and flourish again. I expect you to bring heirs to *that name*, and also heirs to *myself*. I will have no other, now my friend's daughter is married; but, if she had continued single, I would have sought out another heir. I was afraid she would not have married, but she is a good girl at last, and I am her father in future.—This was an agreeable surprize to the new-married pair, who were not wanting in acknowledgements on the occasion. Mrs. Horton wrote us word of this occurrence, and of every thing that happened in the Lucas family.

After two months were elapsed, and my mother made no mention of returning to us, my wife wrote to urge it, being desirous

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that she should be with her before she should be brought-to-bed; saying, she could live without her no longer. Mrs. Lucas wrote to my wife in answer. I transcribe a part of her letter to her.

“ I cannot resist your plea for your mother's return; but it disappoints my intention, which was, that you should have come to fetch her: I still wish it could be so; if you should lie-in here, we could provide accommodations. However, if you will not grant me *this favour*, you must *another*; you must part with Mr. *Bennet*, and send him to conduct your mother home; I have a *reason* for this request. Mr. Lucas is very desirous of being acquainted with your husband; he knows my brother's obligations to him, and his friendship for him. This man assumes the authority of an *husband*, my dear Maria; he pretends to have more generosity than myself; he thinks I have not done enough for your husband, as my relation, and my brother's friend; he wants to *improve* upon my patronage and assistance: thus does he artfully give way to my weakness, to establish his own authority. I shall
not

not explain myself farther: send your husband over, we will not keep him from you long, and will return him *not worse* than he comes; oh that you would accompany him, and share the happiness of your friend!

ANNA LUCAS."

I could not avoid going, though it was with great reluctance. I left my wife; my father promised to take care of her till my return, and to advise me of her health every post.

At my arrival, I met with the most cordial reception from Mr. and Mrs. Lucas. I found him a modest, sensible, and amiable man; like minds are easily acquainted, and we soon became familiar friends. The second day after my arrival, he told me the parish where they resided had lost its rector, and offered the living to my acceptance. I answered as before, that I preferred my present residence to any other; for the same reasons as formerly, that I would not accept any farther preferment, unless I could perform the duties of it; that I was as rich as I wished to be, and as happy as any man could be; therefore I wished him to give the living to some worthy man who was unpro-

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vided for, and make him happy in an easy situation; and at the same time gain an agreeable and respectable neighbour.—Why then, said Mrs. Lucas, we must give it to Mr. Bates, who at present is in a state of banishment at D——. And at the same time we can make another honest man happy. There is poor Bilson, the curate of the next parish, with a wife and seven children, and not more than sixty pounds a year to maintain them: they live in a cottage, and see nobody; and the poor man never comes out but when the priest is wanted. Though Bates thinks D—— a Siberia, Bilson will think it a Montpelier.—But I forgot (said she, looking grave) that I am married: have I your leave, Sir, to do this?—My dear angel! said he, don't ask my leave to dispose of your own property. I adore your benevolence and generosity! seldom, very seldom, do you perform any thing that can be mended: but let me, in return, ask, if I have *your leave* to do what I proposed?—You have, Sir; “I will contend with you upon *this theme*; it is the only one, I trust, that we shall ever contend about.”—He bowed gracefully to her.

her. Then turning to me, You must do us the favour, Sir, as you don't accept this living, to accept the perpetual advowson of the living of S——, as a donation of friendship and relationship from us both.—No, Sir, said our cousin, from Mr. Lucas only; it is his own thought and his own proposal, and he shall have the whole credit of it.—I was confounded at their generosity, I offered to decline it, but they would take no denial, unless, said Mr. Lucas, smiling, you would have us think you are too rich and too proud to accept it.

Mrs. Horton and myself expressed our gratitude in the warmest language our hearts suggested. They stopped us short, saying, Our friendship was their recompence.—The next day, at their desire, I wrote to Mr. Bates to come over. I wrote also to Mr. Bilson, enquiring into the particulars of his situation, and giving him reason to hope for better shortly. Three days after, Mr. Bates arrived, and was in transport of joy at the proposal: he gladly resigned the living of D——, and was immediately presented to Mr. Lucas's own parish. Poor Mr. Bilson
was

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was equally rejoiced to succeed him at D——. Our generous patrons enjoyed the pure and sublime pleasure, of making three families completely happy at the same time. Though I was happy in this respected and beloved family, I grudged every day I stayed; for I longed to return to my dear Maria, who I knew reckoned the hours of my absence. Mrs. Horton urged the necessity of our departure; and I told them with truth, that nothing but my wife's situation should have torn me from them so soon; and that, if she had been with me, I should not care how long I stayed there.

They acknowledged the justness of our plea, and excused us for this time; saying, we should make them amends in future.

Mr. Lucas said, I hope our fair cousin will bring you a son, to succeed you in your own living. I offer myself as sponsor for him, if you are not provided.—I thanked him for the honour, and gladly accepted it.—Mrs. Lucas offered to be godmother; and Mr. Withers the other godfather.—It seems, said Mrs. Horton, that you are certain of a son, but if you should be mistaken?—Then, said Mr. Withers,

Withers, we will reserve ourselves for another time.—Girls are then of no account, said Mrs. Horton. I must be the sponsor in that case.—I will be the other, said Mrs. Lucas, the poor girl shall not be slighted for her sex's sake.—Several strokes of wit and pleasantry passed upon the occasion, till the moment of our departure came ; we took leave of our excellent friends, who shewed much regret at losing us. We hastened home, being impatient to meet those dear and tender friends, who expected us with impatience at least equal to our own. Their joy at our return rose almost to rapture ; but my dear father's looks were a great abatement to mine ; he assumed a cheerful countenance, and strove to conceal the alteration from us all. He encouraged our joy ; he said every thing that could make us easy ; he told me that my return had made him well, and renewed his youth : But I think, William, said he, that I cannot part with you again ; for it seems as if my health, as well as happiness, depended upon you.

The tears started from my eyes. Oh that it depended upon me, said I, to prolong that
life

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life so dear to me!—I embraced him, and wept over him.—Why it does, said my dear father; I will live as long as I can for your sake; and if you did not wish it, I should not have lived so long as I have done. Come, tell us all that has happened since our separation.

I related our cousin's noble behaviour to us and to others, and communicated the happiness I felt to my hearers; and we united our blessings and prayers for our benefactors.

I waited impatiently for the blessing that Providence should bestow upon me. I had twice been disappointed; my two first-born dropt like the early blossoms of the spring, and I ardently wished for a living child.

At length my wishes and prayers were answered; my dear Maria brought me a son within a week after my return home, to the inexpressible joy of every part of my family. My dear father was so interested in this happy event, that he was continually visiting the room, that he might see the child; several times in the day he looked at him, and seemed anxious after every thing that related to him. I wrote to Mr. Lucas immediately, to
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acquaint him with this event, and to claim his promise: I invited all the sponsors to come to the baptism, and rejoice with us.

They did us the honour to come, and I gave my son the name of Valentine, after Mr. Lucas; they shared in our happiness, and spent an agreeable month with us; after which they returned home.

My dear Maria nursed the child herself; and, happily, her health seemed to improve in the discharge of the tender office.

My dear father's decline could no longer be concealed; I saw and lamented it, without power to prevent it. I besought him to have advice from the most eminent physicians. He smiled.—Do you think, my son, they can renew my youth? I know my disorder, it is the lot of mortality; did you think I was immortal? I have lived long enough; I see my children happy; you are well provided for; I have nothing more to wish or to hope for; I am willing to depart when heaven calls me. Your sister's husband is not a man after my own heart, but I will discharge my duty to him and her; send for them, my son; I will see them once more,
and

and take a proper leave of them. I wrote immediately for them to come to us. Mr. Blomfield, who had married my sister, was a wealthy farmer, a close, sordid, selfish man, who had but one thing in his head, which was accumulating riches. He and I could never be much acquainted, our minds would not mix together : we seldom met, and did not desire to meet oftener.

He had married my sister for love, and afterwards bragged of his generosity, and even reproached her with her obligations to him. She was a quiet, harmless, inoffensive woman ; she did not contend with his imperious temper, but sunk into a state of acquiescence, obeyed him implicitly, and gave up every other wish, and every other friend.

Upon this occasion he brought her to visit her father ; but, instead of shewing any concern for him, this man enquired what he had done for his daughter ; said, he had heard that some good fortune had fallen to him lately, and that he had bestowed it all upon his son.

You have been misinformed, said my father ; a relation of my son's wife purchased the

the advowson of my living for him. I did nothing more than resign the living a short time sooner than death would have taken it from me. I gave no money, I lost none, for my son would never receive any part of the income of it so long as I live. I have left my own little fortune equally for you and my son; the only distinction I have made in his favour is this: I have left him all the furniture, plate, and linen of this house, with the farming stock and utensils; and I have left him my executor, and residuary legatee, that you may not have it in your power to give him trouble. I think I have done what justice requires; my heart is easy and satisfied; and it is not in your power to disturb the peace of my mind, nor to make any alteration in it.

This son of earth would have objected to my father's disposal of his property, but it was to no purpose. My father reproved him severely; he told him that he grasped the world too hard; that it would elude his *grasp*, and slide through his hands like water. He bade him look forward to the time when he must

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must resign it, and make preparation for leaving it finally.

The muckworm was shocked at his exhortation; he held his peace, and waited the event. My sister showed a true filial concern and affection for her father; but was under so much restraint in her husband's presence, that she shewed little attention to any person but himself.

My dear father died without pain or regret; I never left his pillow; he expired in my arms, with his hand in mine. His last words were a blessing upon me and mine; and a pious resignation of his soul into the hands of its Creator.

Grief took entire possession of my mind; but indignation at my brother-in-law roused me from this torpid state. I sent for my attorney, a man of worth and character, and bade him explain to this savage what *he* could not comprehend. I determined to execute my father's will *exactly*; and not to favour him in any respect, as my own inclination would have led me to do. It was with some difficulty he could prevail on him
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to quit the house ; but when he did, it took a great burthen off my mind.

He sent his attorney to act for him ; and he, being a man of sense, settled every thing with mine, without giving me the pain of any further conference with Mr. Blomfield. This man went about abusing me, and reflecting upon my dear father's memory ; affirming, that he had bought the living of S—— for me, and that he made a secret of it, that I might have the advantage of it ; and that he had injured his daughter, to provide handsomely for his son. These reports gave me more uneasiness than they ought to have done ; however, my character was so well established, that my word was of more weight than Mr. Blomfield's. It was believed by all people of credit ; and this vexatious affair subsided by degrees. Mr. Blomfield and my family broke off all kind of intercourse from this time ; I would have forgiven *him*, but he knew himself the aggressor, and never forgave *me*. In the course of the same year, Mrs. Lucas intreated my mother to come over, to be present at her delivery,

delivery, and to initiate her into the mysteries of Juno Lucina.

This request could not be denied, Mrs. Horton went over, and was present at the birth of a son and heir, who gave joy to his parents, and to all the friends of the family. At the end of a month, Mrs. Lucas wrote to ask as a favour, that we would come to fetch our mother home; we went accordingly, and carried our young son with us; we rejoiced with our friends upon these additional blessings, and spent a happy month with them, during which, I did the office of a friend to Mr. Bates: I married him to Mrs. Mary Mills, who was a distant relation of our cousin Lucas, and had been the superintendant of her family ever since the death of her mother. She was an humble, modest, worthy woman, of no brilliant qualities, but many useful ones; she made Mr. Bates an excellent wife; and, by giving him a relation to a respectable family, brought him many advantages. Mr. and Mrs. Lucas made the new-married pair many presents, and procured them every thing requisite to the comfort and convenience of their situation.

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We parted with great reluctance on all sides ; as all of us foresaw that our families increasing, and the duties of my situation, would render it inconvenient to visit so often in future as we had done hitherto.

We returned to our own home, and enjoyed the comforts that heaven had given us, in a constant and regular way of life, that afforded very little variety.

The following year Mr. Withers died in a good old age, beloved and regretted by all that knew him ; he left his whole fortune, except some Legacies, to Mr. and Mrs. Lucas ; he left my son an hundred pounds as his godson. This loss was felt by our cousins ; but it was alleviated by the birth of a second son, and the continuance of every other blessing.

This year our mother declined going into Staffordshire ; as she grew into years, long journies became inconvenient and fatiguing to her ; and, beside, her children grew more unwilling to spare her, and she did not like to lose so much of their company.

About three years after the birth of my son, my wife brought me a daughter, whom she

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she also nursed herself; and finding the child grow strong and healthy (more so than any she had yet borne) she suckled her longer than the usual time, because it seemed to agree with both mother and child. I mention this circumstance, because it proved of great consequence, on the interesting event which happened soon after; which introduced into our family a most dear child, and, as I hope, a future mother of it; I will therefore be particular in my narrative of that event.

It was on the 18th of October, 17—, as I was sitting in the parlour with my wife and mother; they working at the needle, I reading to them; a post-chaise stopped at our door. The servant came to us, and told us that a gentleman and lady desired to speak with me instantly. I went to the door directly; I saw there a young gentleman, whose countenance shewed marks of the utmost distress.—I asked what commands he had for me? He seized my hand, pressed it earnestly, and spoke. Dear Sir! worthy gentleman! you are a clergyman, you must have humanity. Take pity on an unfortunate pair, who are in distress of a peculiar kind! This
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lady, my dear wife, is in labour; she was taken ill upon the road, she cannot reach the place whither we were going, and where we were expected; it is full ten miles further; my wife has been in fits; she will expire on the road, unless your goodness will assist us. Have pity upon us, and take us under your roof, and God will reward your humanity!

The gentleman's distress touched my heart; it answered in his behalf, and dictated my reply.—Sir, said I, I can feel for your situation, and it is my duty likewise to assist you; I have a wife, one of the best of women; I will call her to the lady.—I ran into the parlour.—My love, said I, here is a call upon our humanity; a most distressful situation; come and assist me to answer it.—We hastened to the chaise; the gentleman repeated the particulars of the case in the accents of nature, oppressed with grief and tenderness. My wife desired me to assist him in bringing the lady into our house. I opened the door of the chaise; the lady was in a fit; we lifted her out, and carried her into the parlour; the servants came and offered their assistance. We tried the usual methods to recover the

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lady; our mother came to advise us.—I fear, said she, this poor lady has waited too long for the assistance necessary in these cases. Send directly for Mrs. Layton; and let the maids air the room in the mean time, and do you carry her up stairs directly.—I sent away the man servant, and begged my mother to direct the maids.

My wife supported the lady in her arms, and every one strove to be of service to her; the husband was in agonies of grief all this time. At length she opened her eyes; she looked round her, and then fixed them on her husband, and spoke,—My dear, am I at B——?—No, my life, said he, you are in an hospitable family, who have had the goodness to take us under their roof. We stopped at two houses before, and they refused to take us in; but we have found the good Samaritan at last. God reward him and his tender wife!—She looked up at my wife, who was bending over her.

My good angel! said she, do you condescend to take all this trouble upon you?—My dear lady, said my Maria, say not one word of trouble; make your mind easy, and

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be assured that every person in this house will think themselves happy to be of any service to you upon this interesting occasion.

I am not deceived, said the gentleman; this excellent pair deserve the character we heard of them on the way hither.

My mother brought some wine; she made the lady take a little; the gentleman did the same. Let us, said she, carry the lady up stairs, while she is a little better.—Her husband and myself did so, but she fainted again while we were removing her. We left her in the hands of the women of our family, and fetched up stairs the trunk that contained their necessaries; the gentleman paid the post-chaise, and sent it away.

Soon after, my servant returned with the good woman; she went directly up stairs; and I took the gentleman into the parlour, and asked him to give me the particulars of his situation, which he related briefly as follows.

“ I am the only son of a man of rank and fortune; my father had chosen a wife for me, but my heart refused the election of another, and would choose its own partner for

life. I am privately married to that dear woman whom you have seen with me ; I was obliged to conceal it from my father, and therefore I secured her an asylum at a great distance from him against her hour of trial. Unfortunately I delayed too long our journey thither, on account of some accidental hindrances ; but I hoped to have been there to-night. Through that unhappy delay we are subjected to this distress, which I ardently pray may have no bad consequences."

I comforted him in the best manner I could, and put him in hope that all would end happily. While we were talking together, my mother entered the room with the midwife, and their looks boded no good ending of this business.

The good woman said,—Sir, this lady's case is past my skill, she has been too long without proper assistance ; you must send for some gentleman of the faculty, upon whose skill you can rely, for the lady is in very great danger.

This account threw us back into all our fears again.—The case, said I, will admit of no further delay. I will go myself to a
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gentleman who is eminent in his profession; and do you, Sir, comfort the lady, and keep up her spirits in the mean time; and take care to conceal from her our apprehensions.

I took my horse directly, and rode as upon life and death: I was so fortunate as to find the doctor at home, and brought him with me in less time than could have been expected; telling him the case by the way. While we were gone, there passed a most affecting scene between the husband and wife. He lamented the delay of their journey, and said very tender things on the subject. His lady was so much affected, that her reserve gave way, and she said, —My Lord, I shall die, and set you at liberty to obey your father; I shall not grudge my life to make you happy!

She seemed very fond of my wife, and could not bear that she should leave her for a moment.

The tender heart of my dear Maria suffered greatly on this occasion; but she resolved to obey its dictates, to stay with the poor lady, and give her every comfort and assistance in her power.

When I arrived with the doctor, I carried him directly to the lady; I took the afflicted husband away, and left the doctor to the duties of his profession. In half an hour he came to us with a countenance of deep concern.—Mr. Bennet, said he, you have called me to an unfortunate business. I think it my duty to tell you that the lady is in the utmost danger. If the gentleman relies upon my skill, I will perform my duty to the best of my ability; but I think it necessary to inform you, that I am very doubtful whether the lady will survive the crisis, and to prepare you for the worst that may happen.

The husband threw himself in agonies at the doctor's feet; he assured him of his reliance upon him.—Save my wife, said he, and ask what you will for your reward.—Reward, Sir, answered he; I would freely give an hundred pounds to be as many miles another way; and that any other man had the office and the reward. My heart is too much affected with the case; but I will make an effort to save both the mother and child, and will act as a man who is accountable at a higher tribunal than that of the opinion of men.

men.—He went out of the room with tears in his eyes, and left us overwhelmed with grief and despair. I had much ado to keep life in the poor gentleman; he raved like a madman, and then sunk into faintings in turn.

I called upon him, as a *man* and a *christian* to exert his reason, and to pray for resignation to the will of heaven. He threw himself upon the floor, and gave himself up by turns to raving passion and silent despair.

It was about two hours before we heard any thing from above; at length Mrs. Horton came into the room with her eyes swelled with weeping, and her voice faltering.—The lady is *delivered*, said she; both she and the child are *alive*, but it is very uncertain how long they will be so; do not *despair*, but do not be *too secure*.—The gentleman rose up; he embraced my mother, and thanked her for her goodness. God reward you, Madam! you have given me a glimpse of hope. Pray for me, for my dear wife, for all of us! Oh what trouble have we brought

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upon you! but such hearts as yours are their own reward.

My Lord! says Mrs. Horton, for such I find you are, you should make us acquainted with your name and family; you have no friends that better deserve your confidence.

He told us that he was the only son of the earl of D——, and that his father knew nothing of his marriage or his journey, but thought him at his seat in Bedfordshire.—But, Madam, added he, may I not see my love?—Not at present, said she.—May I not see the doctor?—I have prevailed on him to stay till the lady is out of danger, or till—— Oh don't, do not suppose it, said he! I cannot bear the idea: she must not, shall not die!—It is our duty, Sir, to resign to the will of heaven. Do not flatter yourself, lest you should be cruelly disappointed. Heaven has sent you a little daughter, who, if she lives, may be a blessing to you; hope the *best*, and be prepared for the *worst*.—Where is my dear Maria, said I?—She is with the lady; she will not leave her till she sees the event. So saying, my mother retired, and left us in a state of doubt, fear, and anxiety, which
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yet was too soon ended. I sat performing the useless office of advising a composure, which I could not attain. After some hours spent in this manner, the doctor came to us.—Sir, said he, to Lord B——, your wife desires to see you once more; but you must be *composed*, or you will disturb her *last* moments.—He began to rave again.—This will not do, Sir; you must not see her, unless you can command yourself.—Not see her! said he; who shall hinder me!—I will, Sir, said the doctor; and so will every one in the house.—Well, but I *will* be patient as a man can be; lead me to her!—We led him upstairs, and into the room. I was a spectator of the mournful scene; my wife was supporting the dying lady, her arm was under her head, and she held my Maria's hand to her lips. Mrs. Horton held the child, for the mother to take a last look of it. The lady spoke in a low and tremulous voice. You will be the mother of my child?—I *will*, said my wife, in a faltering voice, she shall be as dear to me as my own.—Thank you, my dear friend, God bless you!—The husband ran to the bedside; he kneeled by it;

he sobbed, but could not speak; he took her hand with my wife's in it; she tried to turn that way, but could not.—She said, Farewel, my dear lord! take care of yourself. Do not grieve for me; your father, your child! live—long and happy. God blefs—blefs, keep you!—She fell into a fit with this exertion. We carried the distracted man out of the room, and she expired in a few minutes after. The husband was in agonies; he raved till his strength was exhausted, and then sunk into fainting fits. I begged the doctor to stay with us to take care of him.—I will bleed him, said he; I make no doubt he will soon recover; this kind of grief is not fatal; it is the *silent kind*, that preys upon the *heart*. This man will get over it sooner than one who seems less affected.—He bled the patient, we laid him down upon a bed; I left my servant and a neighbour's son to watch with him, with orders to call me if I was wanted. The doctor went away, and promised to call the next day; it was broad day-light, and yet it seemed as if darkness had still covered us with her sable curtain. I was oppressed with
grief,

grief, but my first care was for those dearer to me than myself. I went and fetched my wife and mother from the scene of death. I intreated them to go and take some repose; they retired together, and I threw myself into an armed chair in the same room; sleep kindly visited us all, and repaired in a degree the fatigue and vexation of the wretched night we had passed, I first awoke, stole softly out of the room, and went to visit my patient; who was somewhat more composed and rational, but had many returns of passion, which were happily allayed by *tears* which he shed plentifully. I wept with him in silence; he poured forth his acknowledgements for my tender sympathy; and for the other services I had done him; he vowed eternal friendship to me and mine, while he should live upon earth.

He talked of sending for an undertaker; but I besought him to leave it to us to pay the last duties to his departed wife. I told him that my father had built a large vault for himself and family, and we would give our guest a place in it; he embraced me with tears and thanks. I reminded him of his

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obligations to the doctor. He took out his pocket-book, and put into my hand two bank bills of an hundred pounds each: I offered to return one of them.—Keep them, my dear friend, said he, to answer incidental expences. Alas ! I hoped to make a different use of them ;—he relapsed into a fit of grief. I brought him to himself, by giving him hopes that his daughter might live, and that there were yet many blessings in store for him.

I stepped out, and gave some necessary orders concerning the body ; and sent for proper assistants, in order to put things in train for a decent disposal of it. My wife and mother arose, and the family began again to put on an appearance of regularity. Lord B—— refused dining with us, and kept his chamber, which I thought best for my friend's sake ; but towards night, my wife had been missing some time, and, as I supposed, was attending to her children. I began to think she staid too long, and feared she was indulging her grief by seeing the body of her late friend. I sought her all over the house. At last I found her in the nursery. I found
her

her—oh divine benevolence ! emanation of the Divinity ! first of Christian virtues ! I found her giving her own breast to the poor little orphan child ; while the tears rolled down her cheeks in compassion for it. I kneeled involuntarily to her as to a superior being.— Oh Maria !—my angel wife ! This action is worthy of thee, and few beside thee would have performed it.

My love, said she, forgive my doing it without first asking your permission ! but I have promised to be a mother to this poor baby, and I mean to perform it religiously ; it is high time that our daughter should be weaned ; and I will preserve her diet for this child, as long as she has need of it.

Excuse you ! my love, said I ; I adore you for it ! And this divine goodness of yours will administer comfort to the heart of the afflicted father of this poor infant ; only take care that your health does not suffer, and that you do not give way to fruitless grief.—I have checked it already, said she, for the dear child's sake ; I submit to the will of heaven in all things.

I left her, to return to Lord B——.
—My lord, said I, your daughter will
live ;

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live; we have got her a nurse,—*such a nurse*, as neither you nor I could ever have expected.—What already? said he.—I had much ado to make him understand or believe this news; but his tears and blessings spoke his gratitude for it. I consulted my wife and mother concerning the funeral; I advised Lord B—— to depart first, but he insisted upon attending it; I waved it for the present, saying, *if you are able*, my lord.—When he first saw my wife, he kneeled to her; called her his guardian angel! his patroness! the mother of his child! “I will find a way to show my sense of my obligations to you, Madam, and to defray your expences for my poor infant.”—We begged him to be silent on that head, and to be assured that friendship, and not interest, was our governing principle. On the day of the funeral, we kept in a backward room. Lord B—— attempted to visit the coffin, but was not able. I sent to a neighbour clergyman, and begged him to perform the service of the church.

I kept with Lord B——; I amused him; and the body was carried out of the house
without

without his knowing it ; he expected that I should officiate, and wondered at the delay. When all was over, I told him ; he thanked me, and blessed me, but had a violent ebullition of grief and passion upon it. This I expected, and was prepared for ; but, as I hoped, it proved the *last*, for he grew more composed soon afterwards.

I called all my family together ; I desired Lord B—— to attend ; I read the prayers of the church, and amongst others the lesson appointed for the funeral service ; during which, Lord B—— wept bitterly, and every one present accompanied him. After the service, I made a brief exhortation, which was a comment upon the chapter I had been reading ; from which I observed that Christians ought not to sorrow as those that have no hope, but to receive comfort from the assurances of another life, and the hope of being one day reunited to those we have loved upon earth ; with an entire resignation to the will of heaven.

My little audience were properly affected by my discourse ; and the poor man, for whose
fake

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sake chiefly I made it, was comforted by it, and was much more composed afterwards.

The next day I took the liberty to advise Lord B—— to remove as soon as possible from the scene of his distress; he took it kindly, and prepared to do so. I offered to account to him for the money he entrusted to my care, but he refused it.—My dear Sir, said he, don't think that I mean this trifle as any return for my obligations to you. Hear me, Sir; I shall be of age in a month, and then I shall receive a legacy from an aunt; life is uncertain; I ought to do something towards providing for this poor child. I will deposit a sum in your hands for her use and benefit; the interest of it, you will accept for her board and necessaries. Don't say one word in answer; I have taken my resolution.—Sir, said I, it will be proper the child should be baptized.—By all means, said he.—By what name would you have her be called?—By her dear mother's, Sophia Melcombe. Then you don't choose she should be known to be your daughter?—Not at present, said he; as my marriage was not known to my father, it is better it should
continue

continue a secret for some time longer.— That shall be as you please.—After some further conference, we agreed to send to I—— for a post-chaise, and that he should depart the next day. The child was baptized; the father named it; he embraced and blessed it. We took a most affecting leave of Lord B——; he was scarcely able to speak a word. He embraced me, threw himself into the chaise, and departed in a flood of tears, with his hat pulled over his face: he waved his hand as long as he could see us, and we seemed as if we had parted with a near relation.

After some days we returned to the duties of our station and employments. The little orphan, by my wife's tender care and offices, began to thrive; and to promise to reward our humanity towards her. The pleasure all our children afforded us, amply rewarded our cares for them. About ten days after lord B's departure, we received the following letter from him:

“ Dear

“ Dear Sir,

WHEN I reflect upon the scenes lately past, my heart is overwhelmed with grief one while, and presently after, it is raised by the most ardent gratitude ; I endeavour to dwell on this last sensation, and to overcome the first.—When I think on the hospitality, generosity, sensibility, and goodness of you and your lady—you seem like pitying angels sent by heaven to save me from despair ; surely there is not such another pair upon earth !—May heaven protect and reward you both here and hereafter !—But these are only words ; the feelings of my heart are unutterable towards you. Friend and brother of my soul !—accept the overflowings of a heart that would, but cannot express its love and gratitude.

I have not yet seen my father ; as soon as I can do something better than talking, I will visit you ; in the mean time my wishes and prayers shall be daily offered for you and your beloved family.

I am, your brother, friend, and servant,

B——.”

About

About a month after, I received a second letter.

“ My dear Friend,

I HAVE seen my father; my countenance wore the marks of the wound my heart so lately received.—He challenged me upon it, and asked what ailed me.—I answered, I have lost a friend.—Oh, that is it, said he.—Upon my soul, Frederick, I thought you had lost your money. How stands your pocket?—I seized the hint. My lord, said I, I owe no more than my legacy will discharge.—So much the better, said he. But a wife, young, rich, and handsome, would put you in cash, and brighten up your countenance.—I do not wish to marry at present, said I.—He went on—A fine woman, bright eyes, lovely bosom, tender heart, good estate.—Pish, said I: I don’t want to talk of women.—Not talk of *women*! said he; what have they done to you?—I turned towards the door.—Stay, young man! said he, haughtily.

Excuse me, my Lord, my heart is not disposed to trifle; allow me to retire.—Who

is

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is this friend?—One whom I have long loved, said I. Give me time, my Lord; I wish to show my duty and my affection also.

Perhaps it was a female friend? Well, I ask no questions.—I wept.—Well, my boy, I say no more just now!—I went out of the room, returned to my chamber, and wept there.—I long to see you, my dear Mr. Bennet; as soon as I can see you to any purpose, expect me! the levity of fashionable manners disgusts me; I long to weep with you in the shades of S——. Yours, truly,

B——.”

In another month I received the following.

“ Dear Mr. Bennet,

“ I WILL do myself the pleasure to wait on you one day in the course of the next week. I think every day a week till I see you at S——: but, alas! I must pass by the church, before I can have the pleasure of embracing my friend. B——.”

Within a week after I received this letter, Lord B—— came to S——: he embraced me with tears, but they seemed to flow easy, and he soon got the better of them. The
fight

fight of his little girl gave him emotions of a joyful kind ; he almost stifled her with his kisses. He called her the likeness of his departed saint ; the precious relick ; his only comfort ! He thanked my wife in raptures of gratitude ; he paid his respects to my mother, whose tenderness he had not forgotten. He remembered the servants ; to whom he had omitted, in his affliction, to make acknowledgments. I told him that his Lordship's beneficence had enabled me to make the requisite acknowledgments to every person that had given their attendance in the hour of trouble ; that we would now enjoy an hour of comfort together, and look forward to happier times and prospects. He agreed with me, that it was right to enjoy the blessings that remained, and suffer them to comfort us for those that were lost.

We spent a cheerful evening, and were delighted with the politeness and amiable qualities of our guest.

The next day, as we were sitting after dinner, Lord B—— took out his pocket-book. —Suffer me, Sir, said he, to enter upon the subject that is nearest my heart. This poor child's

child's provision depends entirely upon me; life is uncertain; I ought to do what is in my power for her, and I cannot be easy till I have done it. I have told you that I took hold of a hint of my father, to let him believe that I had some debts of honour, in order to prevent his farther enquiry into the use I should make of my legacy. I have not told an untruth; this is a debt of *honour* in the *strictest sense*.

I shall deposit in your hands these bills for two thousand pounds, to be employed as you shall think proper.

The interest is to go for her *board* and *necessary expences*, and you must not offer to give me any account of it.

I *insist* upon it, Mr. Bennet; you will affront me, by your saying a word in reply to this my fixed resolution!

Suffer me, my Lord, to say *one word*; not to disapprove of your action, it is at once just and generous; but to give you a *bond* for your security and the child's also.

No, Sir, I will not accept it; if I should be taken away, (a case I am providing for), and this *obligation* should be found; you will be
liable

liable to *repay* it, and then I should have done *nothing*.—Then, Sir, said I, let the bond be deposited in a *third hand*.—No, I will not do *that*. Have I not seen, have I not *felt* the effects of your good heart and principles? If I cannot trust *you*, whom can I rely on! But I know my man, and that is enough. Say no more; I know I am doing my duty, and you must take your share of the *charge* heaven has entrusted to our care. Let us say no more.

He said this with so determined an air, that I submitted.—My Lord, said I, I hope I know my own heart; but yet I wish no man to trust *implicitly* in another; prudence demands that we should guard against accidents.

That is *just what* I have *done*, said he, and have taken a burthen off my own heart; pray say no more. Hear me speak on another subject. My father urges me to marry; I cannot at present *bear* the proposal; I design to go over to the Continent, to avoid being teased about it.—

Let me also say a word on this subject, said I; let me remind you of the words of our dying

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dying friend: "I leave you at liberty to obey your father." He has a right to expect it from you; he wishes to see heirs to his title and fortune; it is also a duty you owe to *that society* of which you are a *member*!—He sighed.—Sir, what you say is *true*; be always my monitor: some time hence I may attend to it, but I am resolved to give at least a *year*, to duty and affection. I will ask my father's permission to go to France; and upon that condition, I will attend to his proposal at my return.—But, my Lord, if I was your father, I *would not consent*. You are an only son; I should fear to trust you to the dangers and accidents of travelling; I should wish to keep you with me, and to see you married as early as possible.—It is well he does not hear you, said my guest, but I have determined to do as I have said; I have no better way to postpone my marriage to a future day. I have now settled my business at home; travelling will amuse my mind; and when I return, I will endeavour to behave as becomes a *son*, and a good *member* of *society*. After this we conversed upon common subjects. I returned to my *charge* more than once, and
would

would fain have given *security* for the money he had put into my hands, but he would not hear a word of it.

He staid ten days with us, during which time he behaved like an affectionate friend and brother to myself and family.

We had several conversations upon religious and moral subjects; and I had the satisfaction to find him well instructed in both respects. He returned in post-chaises as he came. I attended him to I——, spent an evening with him there, and returned home the next day.

From Lord B——'s departure, every thing in my family went on in the usual way; the children grew and improved; my son began to speak and to observe, and he afforded me a constant fund of delight and employment.

Lord B—— went to France within a month after he left us. He wrote me several letters from thence, but forbad me to answer them till he should return, when he would appoint a place for me to direct to him.

In one of them he says, "I shall not return to England till after the 18th of Octo-

ber, *that day* I shall devote to *love and friendship*; I shall send you my meditations upon it." He was as good as his word, and sent me a sheet of paper with his recollections and remarks on the past events; they were tender, resigned, and grateful; and raised still higher my opinion of his principles. His Lordship did not return till the spring following, nor till after frequent and urgent importunities from the Earl his father, who grew impatient to conclude a treaty of marriage for him.

Soon after his arrival, Lord B— wrote to me as follows:

"Dear Sir,"

"I AM at length returned to my matrimonial destiny; the noose has been preparing ever since I have been absent. I could no longer refuse the solicitations of a parent who really loves me to excess. The day after my arrival in town, he attacked me upon the subject. I told him, I was come home with a resolution to obey him, and to sacrifice my wishes to his.—No, my dear son, said he, you shall not do that; though Miss
Gran-

Grantham is the lady I wish you to marry, though I am in actual treaty with her guardian, nay, though I know it has been mentioned to the lady, who has consented to wait your return, and would listen to no other proposal; notwithstanding all this, if you see any thing, upon a farther acquaintance with Miss Grantham, that gives you disgust, if you cannot overcome your dislike to her, I have still another person in view,—it is Lady Mary C—

I replied, that I had no particular dislike to either of the ladies; that I would see them both, and endeavour to like her whom he recommended.—Ah, that indifference! said he. But I will take such a consent as I can obtain, because it is my most ardent wish to see you married.—A few days after, the Earl carried me to an assembly, where both the ladies were. Miss Grantham seemed actually confused at my approach; it was evident she had been apprized of meeting me. I paid my respects to her, but was almost in equal confusion. My father watched every motion that I made, and I behaved to his satisfaction. At my return he asked me impatiently,

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tiently, which of the ladies I liked best? I answered, Miss Grantham, past comparison; she has more understanding, and less pride.

I am glad of it with all my heart, for I am sure by her looks that she likes you; she is sensible and prudent, and has a thousand fine qualities, beside a large fortune. But when will you wait on her, B——?—I answered, Whenever your Lordship pleases.—He embraced me, and was in raptures of joy. The very next day he carried me to pay my respects to the lady; she is really a handsome, accomplished, and agreeable woman: my Lord has put every thing *in train*, and I am in the high road to matrimony. I know you will approve my resolution; my heart at times revolts against a new engagement, but reason and duty are on my father's side, and I am determined to obey him. If I can possibly get away before I am *fettered*, I will pay you a visit at S——; but I seem like an animal that is fastened to its cage, and cannot go beyond the length of my chain.

My

My heart beats towards you all, and particularly to the poor little orphan; I long to see and embrace her.

Present my affectionate regards to your wife and mother, and to the dear little ones; and believe me always

Your affectionate friend,

B——.

P. S. I send you some covers, to write to me often."

In a month after I received another letter as follows:

"ALL is over, my friend; I am once more married; my father is in extasies of joy; my wife is pleased with me; she is really a woman of merit, and deserves my attentions. As soon as I can break away for a week, and make a decent excuse for my absence, I will see you; till when, give me credit for the continuation of my wishes and regards to you and yours, B——."

We expected Lord B—— for several weeks in vain; and when we had given over all thoughts of seeing him, he dropt in upon us one day unexpectedly: but such an

alteration did we perceive in him, that we were almost ready to doubt if it was the same man: he was gaily dressed, and his air and manner corresponded with his clothes. However, he seemed rejoiced to see us; but yet methought there was something of dignity and distance about him; something that said, I am your superior. He asked for the children, without particularizing one from the rest. My wife ran to fetch them; she brought in the little orphan; my son and daughter came with them; she gave the child to the father's arms; he looked earnestly at it, and sighed. It has the mother's features, said he! I should know it among a thousand children.—I am glad of it, my lord, said I; it will always be a claim to your paternal affection.—Yes, past doubt, said he.—She can walk, my lord, said my wife, and begins to prattle. Come hither, my dear, and lead her, said she, speaking to her son.—He came, and was proud to lead her along the room; he called his sister to take the other hand,

—Lord B—— was delighted.—My little friend, said he to my son, which of your two companions do you love best?—Sir, said

said he, I love them both best.—How is that?
 said lord B——.—Why, Sir, this is my little
sister, and this is my *litte wife*.—Lord B——
 smiled: That is very well explained; do
 you hear him, Mr. Bennet?—My lord, said
 I, don't think we have taught him this;
 upon my word the thought is his own!—
 It is a happy one, said my lord: if I give
 my consent, I hope you will not refuse
 yours?—I will check him for it, my lord, in
 time.—Why then you are a *prouder man* than
 I, for upon my *bonaur* I mean what I say:
 I shall think this little girl well disposed of,
 if you will engraft her into your family.
 She owes you the duty of a child already; and,
 if the little man hold in the same mind, and
 the girl likes him, as I am *sure* she will, she
 cannot be any where so well bestowed.

If your lordship *holds* in the *same* mind,
 said I, we certainly can have no objection.—
 Then give me your hand, and it is a match.
 What say you, Madam?—I say as my hus-
 band does, said Mrs. Bennet: I am sure
 she is as dear to me as my own children.—
 Why then we are all of one mind, said my
 lord; and I swear to you that this alliance

will give me the greatest pleasure, and take much care from me. Sophia is your daughter, madam, from this day forward.

We had a good deal of pleasantry upon this subject; and I saw clearly that lord B— was pleased to get the child off his hands. However he behaved both with kindness and politeness to us all; he offered us many presents, but we declined them all; and only requested the continuance of his friendship to us, and of his affections to his daughter.— It is impossible, said he, that either of them can suffer any abatement.—I hope so, said I; and we will endeavour, on our part, to preserve them inviolable.—After this conversation, we talked of this alliance as a thing settled and agreed upon. My lord spoke very highly of his wife, of her prudence and management, and her knowledge in family affairs. I thought it *too early* for the lady, who was a year younger than my lord, to enter into these kind of affairs; and from this *trait* of her character, I foresaw that she would take the lead; and govern the family, and her lord also.

He

He spent four days with us in high spirits, and then returned home, telling me, he would always send me covers to write to him; and desiring to be informed, from time to time, of every thing interesting that should pass in my family.

From this time lord B—— began to grow slack in his correspondence with me; though he still preserved the same kindness and politeness in his manners and expressions. — “Let me know what passes in *your family* that is likely to be interesting to me. Tell me how *all your children* get forward, at your leisure.”

Within a year after his marriage he wrote to me, — “Congratulate me, dear Sir, on the birth of a son and heir; it completes the happiness of my father, my wife, and myself.” — Alas, poor Sophia! said my dear Maria, thou art of no consequence in the scale against *a son*; thou wilt be forgotten by thy father; but thou wilt be still dearer to thy foster parents for this reason.

I heard nothing from lord B—— for seven months after. I then wrote to acquaint him, that we intended to inoculate our

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children, and to ask whether he had any objection to his Sophia being of the party; his answer was,

“I leave it to you, my dear Sir, to do the same for Sophia, as for *your other children*. I cannot disapprove any thing you propose; write to me when all is over.”

Towards the end of the same year he wrote again,

“I rejoice to hear that *your children are all* perfectly recovered, and in better health than before. I am very happy in my married state; my wife is a very prudent and managing woman; she takes all trouble and care from me. A second son is born to me, and I fancy myself a person of great consequence, and am every day more satisfied with my situation.”

The following year my lord sent three lottery tickets—“*for your three children*,” said he, “to be equal sharers in each other’s good or bad fortune. My time is so filled up, that I cannot write so often as formerly, but am always yours.”—One of the tickets came up a prize of a thousand pounds, of which I advised lord

lord B——. To which he wrote a very short billet.

“ I rejoice in the good fortune of *your children*; let it be equally divided between them. Remember me to all your family.”

I wrote to him as often as he sent me covers, for he forbade me to write without them.

The coldness of his letters seemed to throw me to a greater distance; I found it difficult to speak to him with the same ease and freedom as formerly. However, I dropt many hints of the *alteration*, of which *he took no kind of notice*. I gave him an invitation to come over.

“ Shall we never again see your lordship at S——? I am loth to believe

“ you have resolved against it. I wish you

“ to be an eye-witness of the improvement

“ of your Sophia; allow yourself to see her,

“ and you must love her.” In my lord’s answer to this he says,

“ I have not resolved against visiting you at S——, but my engagements will not allow me to fix any time. Perhaps I may drop in upon you, when you least expect me. I do not forget those who have a *constant title* to my *affection*; but my reasons against disclo-

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ing a certain *secret* grow every day stronger."

In another letter, the following year, there was another remove.

"You will oblige me infinitely, my dear Mr. Bennet, if you will, in your future letters, omit the words, *your daughter*, and *your Sophia*; and only speak of her as one of your own children. I know you will blame me, but I have my *reasons* for this precaution. I would not for the world that your letters should fall into *other hands* than my *own*. Besides, I love your letters, and wish to preserve them; and this circumstance obliges me to *destroy them*. I am as much as ever your friend, &c."

It was now very clear to us, that my lord never intended to acknowledge his daughter; his wife had brought him four children, two of each sex. He had no mind that Sophia should claim any share of his fortune with these; he had portioned her off, and transplanted her into another family. The child was endeared to us by every circumstance of her birth and situation; but she grew still dearer by the amiable qualities which she disclosed; we knew no difference between her
I
and

and our own, except a certain tender compassion that seemed to give her in many respects a kind of *preference*.—My wife gave it as her opinion, that this child should have some advantages in her education above our own. It is not impossible, said she, that she may one day be acknowledged as the child of a noble family; she may be raised to an higher station. I would not have her be thought unworthy of it, by those who respect *external* accomplishments above *mental ones*. I am not fond of boarding-schools in general. I prefer a home education for my own daughter, but I will enquire after one for Sophia; and whenever I hear of a proper one, I will send her for a few years. When she comes home to us at the vacation, we shall see and judge of her improvements, and they will be of service to our child, who loves her so well, that she will endeavour to be like Sophia in every respect.

Our mother was of the same opinion; and I left it entirely to them to act as they thought proper. I sent my son to a gentleman of excellent character, not only for learning, but for the strictest attention to the *morals* and *manners*.

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manners of his pupils. Sophia was sent to a school recommended by a lady in our neighbourhood, whose daughters were educated there.

We missed the children exceedingly; our daughter was for some time inconsolable, but our joy at their return made us amends for their absence. The affection between our daughter and Sophia became more observable: we knew not till this separation how much the dear child loved us all.

Her sorrow at leaving us was affecting; my wife was hurt at it. — My love, said she, you have many agreeable companions where you are going, you must have *some there* whose society will supply that you leave. — Oh, no, no! said the dear girl, they are not able to supply the loss of my dear mama, my honoured grandmama, and my sweet Anna Maria. — We parted with tears on all sides, and reminded each other of the next vacation when we should meet again.

At the next Christmas, when we were all together, and rejoicing in the dear circle of domestic happiness; Sophia said, I have a request to make to my dear papa and mama,
which

which will make me very happy if it is granted ; and if refused, I shall be very miserable.—My dear child, said my wife, what can that be ? your earnestness alarms me.—The child ran and threw her arms about my wife's neck ; she wept in her bosom.—Speak, my love, said she, and, if it be not very improper, it shall be granted.

It is, Madam, that you will either send my dear Anna Maria to school with me, or else let me stay at home with her ; I cannot bear to leave all those I love, and to be sent among those who do not care for me, nor I for them.

I must consider of it, my dear ; it is not a question to be directly answered ; it is of some consequence.—Only tell me that you are not angry with me, Madam ; I am afraid you are ?—No, my dear Sophia, I cannot be angry at a request that shews so strongly your affection to us. I will consult Mr. Bennet and my mother, and let you know our determination ; but let my dear child be assured, that her happiness is of as much consequence to us as our own ; be easy, be happy, my love, or else we shall not be so.

At

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At our next evening's conversation, this subject was discussed. I gave my consent that my daughter should return with Sophia to school; when it was declared, the dear children were equally rejoiced; they were fully convinced that we could deny them nothing that was proper to be granted. Sophia was considerably improved, and promised to be a most amiable creature.

My wife ordered that Sophia should be taught French, music, drawing, and many other things that are the embellishments of the female character, and which she thought unnecessary for the humbler situation of her own child; but the affection of these two children rendered her precaution useless, for whatever Sophia learned, she always taught to the sister of her heart. The improvements of both gave equal satisfaction to their friends, when they visited us at their vacations.

My son likewise grew a fine youth, and was all that my heart could wish both in person and mind.

We kept up a constant correspondence with the Lucas family, and our friendship was

was never interrupted or abated. Mrs. Lucas brought her husband three sons, and two daughters; they lived together in the most perfect harmony; they visited us three times in the course of ten years, and we paid them two visits; we rejoiced with each other on the promising qualities of our children, not one on either side had either defect or blemish.

Lord B—— had reduced his correspondence with me to very short limits; *once* or sometimes *twice* a year, very short letters; and had not, for many past years, once mentioned Sophia as his *daughter*. Upon the death of the earl his father, I wrote him a long and serious letter. I remonstrated, as became my function, on the duties of the parent, and the cruelty of casting off an innocent and unoffending child: and, lest he should think I had any view to aggrandize my own family by his alliance, I told him that the day that restored lady Sophia to her family, should put an end to my expectations on my son's behalf; that he was yet a child, and knew not what was meant by the contract between us; that he loved Sophia, as his sister only, and had as yet no further ideas of love. Upon
this

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this account, I thought it proper to speak in *time*, that I would acquit his lordship of his promise *now*; but I would not promise to do it *hereafter*, when probably my son's happiness might be at stake: that whatever might *influence his actions*, it was incumbent on me to discharge my *duty*; for that I lived to God and my conscience, and not to the opinions of *men*.

I received a short letter in answer:

“ You are very serious, my dear Mr. Bennet. I will not *just now* enter upon the *subject*; but I will *ere long* tell you *all* that I *think* about it. I forgive your remonstrance, it is in *character*. I respect and love you the *more* for it. I do not think I have done badly for my *charge*, in having put it under your and Mrs. Bennet's care. I am, and ever will be, your friend, &c.

“ D——.”

In less than a month after this, I received the following, which was written in a hand evidently disguised:

“ SIR,

"SIR, *this account I thought I should*
 "YOU will shortly receive a visit from
 Mr. Melcombe, the father of Miss Sophia
 Melcombe, your charge; but you are de-
 sired to know him *when I would* by *no other name*, as you
 love him or his daughter.

PHILOSOPHOS."

This kept us in continual expectation;
 we sent for the girls from school, and pre-
 pared our Sophia to see her father.

One day the following week, as we were
 sitting in my study, my servant came to tell
 me a gentleman was at the door; but the
 gentleman followed him so close, that he
 had hardly time to announce him. I rose to
 meet Lord D——, who came forward and
 embraced me more affectionately than, I
 believe, I returned it; for I was not pleased
 with him.—Where is Mrs. Bennet! said
 he; where are the *children*?—In the parlour,
 said I; but let me speak to you first alone!
 Not a word will I hear, said he, till I have
 seen them; but don't tell me which is So-
 phia; let me find her out.—He went out;
 I followed him into the room, where my
 wife

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wife and children were sitting at their needle. I did not announce him; my tongue refused to favour the *deception*.—Sit still, Mrs. Bennet, said he; sit still, young ladies; I will not disturb you.—He went to each of the girls, and looked earnestly at both.—Then taking Sophia's hand, This is she? said he, looking at me.—Let nature inform you, said I? it is said, she has done *wonders* in *this way*.

I cannot be mistaken, said he; this is my child! The child fell upon her knees to him; he raised, embraced her, and took her upon his knee; he looked earnestly in her face, till the child was abashed; she hid her face, and wept.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



and with a look of surprise, she said, "I cannot be mistaken, I am sure, this is my child. The child felt open for years to him, and now, embraced her, and took her up, and said, 'I looked carefully at her face, and the child was smiling at me just as I did when I was a child.'"

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

